

THORNS
IN THE
FLESH

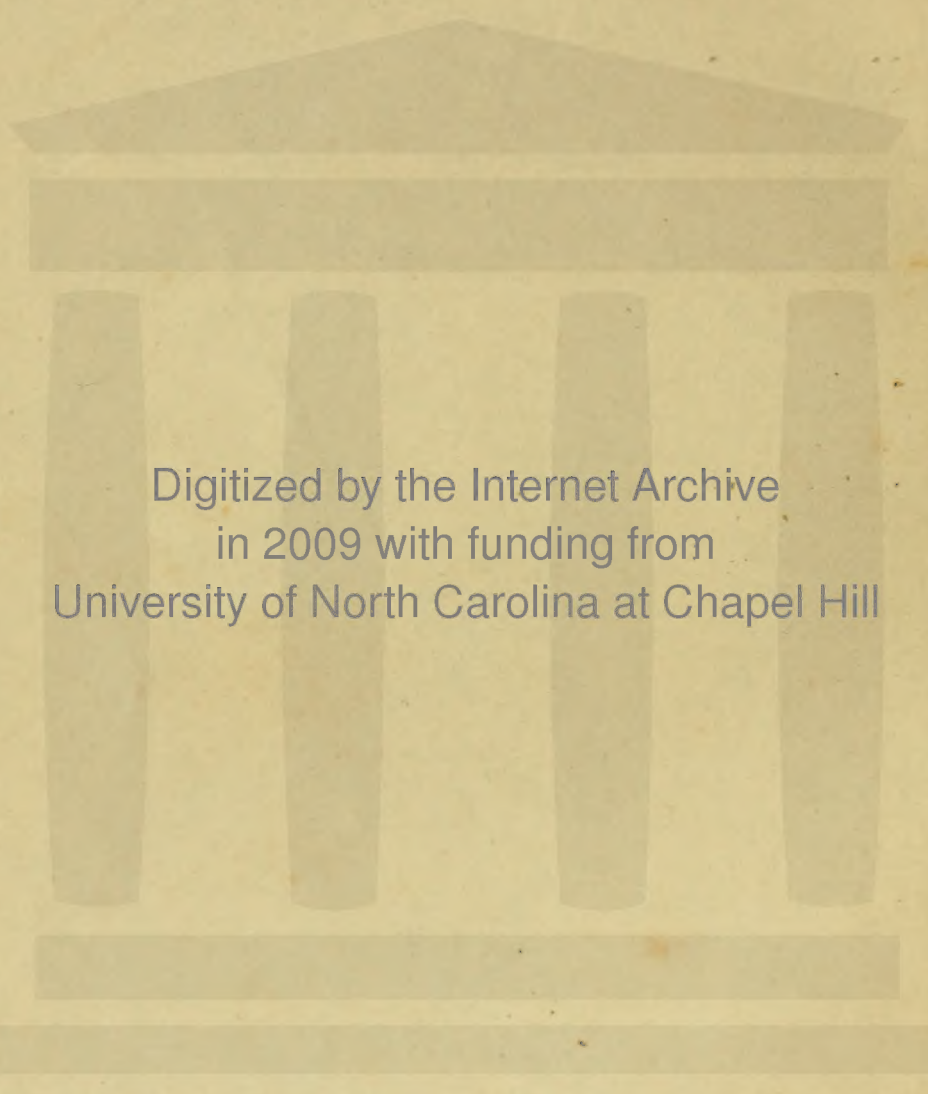


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“Keep in line, men! Is you ‘feard of a brayin’ mule?” (Page 546.)

THORNS IN THE FLESH.

[A ROMANCE OF THE WAR AND KU-KLUX PERIODS.]

A VOICE OF VINDICATION FROM THE SOUTH

IN ANSWER TO

"A FOOL'S ERRAND" AND OTHER SLANDERS.

SYLLABUS:

SLAVERY—A THORN, grown into the very flesh and blood of the country and of society.

ABOLITIONISM—A THORN in the side of Southern love for the Union.

THE "HIGHER LAW" DOCTRINE—A THORN in the heart of the Southern hope for peace and fair play.

WAR—A CROWN OF THORNS, which conferred upon the brow of the South a regal majesty—a fathomless woe.

RECONSTRUCTION—A PATH OF THORNS over which Carpet-baggers—unfitted for such authority—led the captive South.

PARTISAN ANIMOSITY—THE HIDDEN THORNS that crippled the South in her march toward social peace, political harmony, and material restoration.

MISREPRESENTATIONS—THE LITTLE THORNS that exasperated those who honestly desired peace and unity.

"A masterly showing of historical facts threaded upon a romance of closer adherence to reality and yet of greater and more thrilling power than 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' or 'A Fool's Errand.' "—THE STATE (Richmond, Va.).

BY N. J. FLOYD.

MANY GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS.

HUBBARD BROS., PUBLISHERS:

PHILADELPHIA, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO, NEW YORK, BOSTON,
KANSAS CITY.

1884.

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BY N. J. FLOYD,
1884.

Dedication:

TO

MRS. M. L. GARLAND,

FORMERLY

MISS MARY LIGHTFOOT ANDERSON,

THE KIND FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR'S CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND
MANHOOD, AND THE ONLY REMAINING REPRESENTA-
TIVE OF ONE GENERATION OF HIS FAMILY;

TO THE

GRACIOUS, ATTRACTIVE AND CULTIVATED CHRISTIAN LADY,

WHO, IN HER EIGHTY-FOURTH YEAR, IS A LIVING EXEMPLIFICATION
THAT PURITY OF HEART CAN GIVE PERENNIAL SPRING-TIME
TO THE FEELINGS; AND THAT LOVELINESS OF CHAR-
ACTER AND LIFE MAY DEPRIVE EVEN TIME
OF THE ABILITY TO ROB THE COUNTENANCE OF ITS CHARM,

THIS VOLUME

IS

RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

· COMMENTS.

"Capt. N. J. Floyd is a cousin of the late General John B. Floyd, Secretary of War under President Buchanan. He is a man of wide thought and research. . . . The tone of this book, except in dealing with a certain class of hypocrites, is distinctly irenic, and is especially admirable in recognition of the real heroes of the North. It is, in fact, a masterly showing of historical facts, threaded upon a romance of closer adherence to reality, and yet of greater and more thrilling powers, than 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' or, 'A Fool's Errand.' "—"THE STATE." (Richmond, Va.)

"It is the work of a man of genius. The descriptions in it are strong and graphic; the argument presented with such force and in such form that we do not hazard too much in predicting that it will reach the forum of the nations; while wit, pathos, humor and curious traditional and local lore happily succeed each other, and the war scenes and love incidents are intertwined like scarlet and golden threads."—"DAILY NEWS." (Lynchburg, Va.)

"We know the author to be a fine writer, and his views are not only sound, but conservative, and still they are Southern and Virginian through and through. We have needed just such a book . . . Judge Tourgee has given us since the war what Mrs. Stowe did before, and we have suffered for the want of a popular book vindicating our side of a controversy that looks as if it started at Plymouth Rock and will stop only at the North Pole."—"THE ADVANCE." (Lynchburg, Va.)

"The work is cast in the form of a novel, but is a profound yet most engaging philosophical argument withal, involving a complete and unanswerable vindication of the civilization of the Southern States before, during, and since the war . . . It is believed by those who have seen the MS. of this volume that the author, as did Byron, 'will wake up to find himself famous.'"

—EDWARD S. GREGORY.

PREFACE.

THE Author makes no apology for presenting this volume to the public. Indeed, he feels that an apology is due to himself, together with the general reading public, from all the literary men in the South for their dereliction of duty in leaving the patriotic task, herein attempted, to the unskilled pen of a layman in the field of literature.

There has been a long-felt want for a work somewhat like this, but of course broader and deeper, by all those who realize the fact that the world has come to believe fully in the Italian maxim that "Silence makes confession." The South has been virtually silent for twenty years respecting the slanders that have been and are being heaped upon her by every type

of the radical Puritan notoriety-seeker, from him who writes himself a Fool with a capital "F," down to the less ambitious and less egotistical creatures who are content to wait for an intelligent public to apply that appropriate epithet, and to spell it with a lower-case initial letter.

This patient, long-suffering silence, this withholding of the antidote to the poison of fanatical prejudice, is a crime against the children of the heroes, dead and living, of our land, and does not appeal to the magnanimity, or to the sense of propriety of our traducers in "God's Country." On the contrary, it seems only to stimulate those heaven-favored mortals to renewed and more lively efforts, until now scarcely a divinely inspired penny-a-liner can speak of the South without indulging in what is intended for and what is fondly, and perhaps piously, believed to be, clever witticisms or stinging sarcasms upon our humanity, Christianity, civilization, and social characteristics.

These busy bees that gather honey from the stamens of the Upas remind us of a little mob

of boot-blacks which we once saw plotting against the peace and happiness of a mason's apprentice with whom they had had a difficulty, and who was sitting at the foot of a scaffolding near by, tenderly cradling his right hand in his left, while his facial expression, and the silent tears coursing down his cheeks, told that he was suffering physical pain. "Come on, Bill," said one of the little "shiners" to the leader of the mob; "le's go an' sass him! Tell him his pap was a sneak-thief, an' his mam wuss'n that. He can't hurt nobody; his right thumb is out o' jint." To the average mind in the South it seems strange that so many of the literati—some of them properly so-called—in "God's Country," should evince such entire want of Christian charity toward their silent and passive brothers whose "right thumb is out o' jint," and who certainly meant no offense by being born in a different section, which, however, they respectfully insist is not the devil's country.

It is earnestly hoped that nothing in these pages will offend any fair-minded lover of truth

and right and fair play, whether the "accident of birth" shall have made him a much-to-be-envied inhabitant of "God's Country," or only an "outside barbarian." To those who may take umbrage at plain statements of plain truths, or at flat denials of popular errors and falsehoods, we can only say, regretfully: Gentlemen, we mean no offense, but we love truth, not only for its own sake, but also because it vindicates us. We sit at the foot of the scaffolding by means of which that magnificent structure, the NEW SOUTH, is being erected, but we have dried our tears and washed our face; the light of hope beams from our eyes, and our right thumb is quite well, we thank you.

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THORNS IN THE FLESH.

CHAPTER I.

"RANTING REBELS."

"What is truth?—a staff rejected."—WORDSWORTH.

*"Better to sink beneath the shock
Than moulder piecemeal on the rock."*—BYRON.

ON a bright spring morning of the year Eighteen Hundred and Sixty-one, a half dozen young men were collected, in apparently solemn conclave, upon the platform of a way-station of the Memphis and Charleston railway, where that great artery of traffic sweeps through the remarkably beautiful and fertile portion of North Alabama, known as the Tennessee Valley.

In front of the station, and extending southward for several miles to the greenish-gray background of sturdy oaks, interspersed with hickory, walnut, sweet-gum, elm, sycamore and beech, which skirt the swamp, lie some thousands of acres of cultivated land. Every foot of this broad expanse, even including the inner corners of the primitive "worm" fences which partitioned the domains of different proprietors, was neatly prepared for the growth of the "staff of life" or the production of the

great "King crop of the South," COTTON—that blessing to civilization, but bane to all hope of the adoption, by the master class, of a system of free labor.

A bird's-eye view of the landscape presented the appearance of a mammoth chess-board, upon the squares of which, instead of "castles strong" and "knights of high degree," were, here and there, "gangs" of negro slaves busily engaged in "bedding land," "opening drills," "planting cotton," by sowing the seed in the drills with a quick, lively motion, resembling the prelusive feints of a javelin-thrower, or "siding and thinning" the tender young corn which was already "hand-high;" while occasionally some stalwart son of Ham, feeling a sudden flow of exuberant animal spirits, would shout, in a chanting monotone, a challenge, always amusing and often witty, to the laggards of the field, to "get out of the ashes" and show their prowess with the plow, "follow-block" or seed-bag.

As interesting as the scene would have been to one disposed to allow his eyes and thoughts to rest upon it, the young loungers at the station did not deign to give it one glance, and seemed to be all unconscious that nature had put on one of her brightest smiles, and had wooed every living creature, brute and human, into cheerfulness, save only themselves and the solemn-looking little old gentleman, with a military air and side whiskers, the worthy station agent, who was dispensing the news collected from the Northern papers which a kind-hearted conductor, a native of New England, had left him the day before. The old gentleman read and commented in a solemn tone, until finally one of the young listeners uttered an indignant shout of protest with the exclamation :

“Hold up, Major! In the name of mercy, give it to us in broken doses! The *Tribune* already has its Moloch gaze fixed upon us. The *Times*, even now in fancy, tastes our hot blood. The *Press*, in its nightly dreams, chases our ‘cowardly ragamuffins’ with its terrible ‘shooting-stick,’ and even the poor little Chicago *Tribune* wants to pin our ears back and make big Illinois gulp us down head and heels! Major, you have marched under ‘the old flag’—have flashed your sword in the faces of a foreign foe, and those flashes have added a ray of glory to the banner you love. We shall not quarrel with you if you decide to ‘disperse.’ But it matters not what our fathers did! They did their duty in their times and we shall do our duty in ours. They made ‘the old flag’ to represent truth and honor, and we all loved it! It has been seized by a fanatical faction and prostituted to the purposes of political wrong, injustice and treachery toward us, and we spit upon it! Could the spirits of Washington and the other true patriots of the Revolution return to earth they would now beat it down with their spectre swords with greater earnestness than characterized them when, in the flesh, they set it up as the emblem of a virtuous popular sovereignty, acting, and to act, under the necessary and wise rules and restrictions of a written constitution. And could the spirit of Patrick Henry descend upon *me*, I would make you all a speech—ha, ha! But come; we will go around to Smith’s and have a few bottles of his sparkling Catawba to brace up with. The train is an hour overdue. I fear some accident has befallen. Ha! here comes Howard across the field, looking as bright and happy as if he hadn’t seen a Northern newspaper since virtuous Massachusetts sent us her slaves.”

All eyes were turned in the direction indicated by the speaker, where a tall, handsome man, apparently about forty years of age and mounted upon a graceful, trim-looking "hunter," was cantering leisurely along a "turn-row" in the field of cotton beds that lead to the railway at a point opposite the station. Nearing the fence he touched his broad felt hat in a half-military salute, and exclaimed :

"Hello boys ! What's up ? Plotting against ' the best government the world ever saw ' ?"

"No ;" replied young Flournoy, the first speaker ; "our plots would avail nothing against the plotting fanatics and howling press which have assumed that grandiloquent title. We are waiting to greet Stewart. Fox expects him on this train, now long overdue, and we have ridden over to satisfy ourselves that he has not been roasted on Salem hill, as a 'damnable Sadducee,' or one of the ' locusts from the pit.'"

"Ah ! Stewart coming to-day ? Glad to hear it ! He will bring us some fresh and reliable news from our friends over the border with volcanic heads and Icelandic hearts."

"Oh, there is news enough that is fresh and reliable ! Some of it has an excess of the first quality—freshness."

"Let's have it."

"Why the President of our neighbor, the United States, has called for seventy-five thousand troops, and the papers say there are indications that ' the chivalry ' will not stand long enough to give one-third of that number a good half-day's sport ! "

"The latter part of that *is* fresh in one sense, but it's all as old as the hills—I heard it yesterday. What in the name of all that is terrible *can* he want with such an immense army ?"

“He doesn’t want to take two bites at a cherry, I presume.”

“Wants to wipe us off the face of the earth on Monday and sow salt on Tuesday ; eh ? ”

“Oh, no ! The papers say they are unwilling to have us exterminated. They like us well enough in our place—as the money purveyor and court jester to the ‘ Nation.’ Only one-third of that fearful army is to be used ‘ to burn out the rats in Richmond ;’ one-third is to be ‘ sent to Cairo to seize the cotton ports ’ and the other third will be used as a sort of general-utility force, to ‘ police ’ Washington City,—clean out the Augean Stables, I presume—and to deploy along the gulf coast, as a skirmish line and picket-guard combined, to prevent the ‘ chivalry ’ from stampeding into the gulf and leaving none to perpetuate an eccentric and amusing race.”

“That’s a good idea,” laughed Mr. Howard, having hitched his horse to the fence and coming forward to join the party, “I shouldn’t be surprised if it should ultimately be demonstrated that those people really do possess some philanthropy. That looks like it, but as far as I am concerned, I had about as soon drown myself trying to escape from a terrible terror as to be frightened to death trying to face it.”

“Yes, the effect upon the future history of the world would be substantially the same in either case. But come ; we are going around to Smith’s to have some sparkling Catawba. By-the-by, that old turnip-juice brewer, Longworth, says he can take his pestle-handlers and whip out little South Carolina. And he seems anxious, too, to take a contract to do that little job as his part of the work to be done in ‘ wiping out the rebellion.’ ”

“And as you don’t hope for an opportunity to punish him for his impudence, you will imitate ‘Cousin Joe,’ in the ‘Rough Diamond,’ and take your revenge out of his wine, eh?”

“Yes, but wouldn’t it be fun to see Fox here, with a dozen or so ‘Spirits of the Lost Clan’ turned loose on the old cider brewer and his whole tribe of bottle-washers and pestle-handlers for about ten minutes! Ha, ha! It would be worth a trip up there to see the fun!”

“Ah, boys!” said the new-comer, “you young bloods can laugh and have your fun, and we older heads can join you at present, but I fear the time is rapidly approaching when there will be very little laughing for any of us to do. All history teaches that civil war is a terrible thing, and we must not cheat ourselves into the belief that ours is to be an exception to the rule. There is but one thing in our favor. We possess a higher civilization—North, as well as South—than was ever known to any people who engaged in civil strife on a large scale. But there is danger that, in the heat of passion, which is already very great at the North, and which must necessarily be greatly intensified by future conflict, the promptings of a high civilization may be disregarded. There is much more danger of this at the North than at the South, for, besides the different qualities of the two civilizations, resulting chiefly from Puritan religionism having been substituted for Christianity,—those people are, of course, destined to be grievously disappointed in their present silly expectations of achieving a cheap and easy victory; and under the humiliating sting of that disappointment there is danger that factions, communities and parties, up there, may surrender themselves to the wild and reckless leadership of such miserable fanatics as

Wendell Phillips, ‘the infernal machine set to music,’ Thad. Stevens, the evil spuke with a monk’s visage, and thousands of other and similar sons of the Evil One, who wear the cloak and mask of Christianity and philanthropy, and hate us,—for the conceited bigot’s best reason—because we laugh at their sanctimonious hypocrisy; or, if they make no pretensions in that direction, because we ridicule their *advanced* ideas—by them so-called.

“We can laugh, boys, at Mr. Lincoln’s seventy-five thousand troops, and can feel an amused contempt for the expressed views and ideas of certain leading periodicals and men respecting our military prowess; but we should prove ourselves as silly as our traducers should we fail to appreciate the magnitude of the undertaking before us, or close our eyes to the immense superiority of the North over us, in all things that go to insure success in a great war, except spirit, devotion, military aptitude and a just cause; for we have what we believe to be, and what our history and traditions teach us is, a just cause. And we have a devoted population. The ex-Secretary of War is our only public man who has admitted to the people that we are on the eve of such a war as our forefather’s fought with England for independence. It may be that many of our leading men do not think so; but the people do, and, as a proof of it, we see them preferring to enlist for ‘three years or the war,’ when they know that Federal enlistments, in New England and other sections, are being made for only three months. If our leaders are as determined as the people generally, we can never be conquered. But of course it is possible that we may become powerless from exhaustion. If the enemy should succeed in effectually blockading our coasts, which of course they will attempt,

and should they refuse to exchange prisoners, and at the same time vandalize and devastate our land, which I think their civilization—that better civilization possessed by the great majority whom the Puritan fanatics are now leading by the nose—will not permit them to do, I say if these things should be accomplished, done and perpetrated toward us, then it would become a mere question of time with us, as with an immense besieged fortress.

“We have an element of strength which our enemies are counting on as an element of the greatest possible weakness. Our negroes will feed and clothe the troops and our families while we are in the army. The radical press predict that when we march to the front the screams of our wives and children being butchered and outraged by the slaves, and the smoke of our burning homes, fired by them, will cause our troops to countermarch much more rapidly than they marched to the front; and that the terrible seventy-five thousand will have nothing to do but to follow on and hang our leaders. Can it be ‘that the wish is father to the thought?’

“How little do our fearfully philanthropic friends, the Puritans, understand of the relations existing between master and slave! They fondly believe that our civilization and Christianity have failed to eliminate from the African’s bosom his fierce natural instincts, and that they only lie dormant awaiting such an opportunity for deeds of villainy as the one now about to present itself. Were the negro only the subdued savage which they believe him, or were he fired with a feeling of animosity toward the white people, we would certainly be unable to wage even the ninety days’ war, the Puritans are preparing for with so much of mirth and hilarity.

“As to Mr. Lincoln’s seventy-five thousand troops, I

consider that call only as a feeler for the North and a blind for the South. The leaders there are not gibing idiots, if many of their writers are ; and their best men, those who, in the past, have mildly protested against political outlawry and treachery, will, now that we have declined to submit to such outlawry and treachery longer, strongly urge the war against us ; yet not because they have come to love honor and fairdealing less, but because they believe the prosperity of their country will be put back a century, or permanently destroyed, if a powerful rival shall be substituted for the rich and good-natured customer, the South, who has never seriously protested against being taxed, by protective tariffs, for their benefit ; and who has paid liberally, in cash or cotton, for manufactures and notions which she might have produced for herself, to say nothing of such untamed Africans as the enterprising Puritan ship owners of New England have been able, from time to time, to smuggle into our Gulf ports, despite our vigilance and the national laws ;* for the Government of the United States was hardly formed before Virginia, backed by other Southern States, moved to have the slave trade declared piracy ; and finally succeeded, despite the opposition of New England, which section found the human traffic exceedingly profitable to her people, and has never forgiven us for destroying, in

* In the early Spring of the year 1861, Midshipman McCook, son—or nephew—of Major McCook, U. S. A.—afterward a Maj. General on the “Union” side—was in Richmond, Va., attending the sitting of the United States Court there, as a witness against the Captain and crew of a slaver which his vessel, the *San Jacinto*, had captured, crowded with Africans, “packed almost like sardines in a box,” as Mr. McCook expressed it, and bound for the Gulf coast of Louisiana. The poor creatures were taken back, sent up the Congo River and liberated ; and a crew was furnished from the *San Jacinto*,

a measure, that lucrative business, which was exclusively their own, and forcing those of them who have continued it, to assume the position of pirates in the eyes of the national law.

“As regards our easy subjugation we know that the North is very powerful in money and munitions of war, and if, behind the little army the President has called for, she shall march upon us half a million of disciplined troops, and do it before the close of this present year, it is possible that, destitute as we are of the appliances of war, and without time to procure or manufacture them, we may be driven into the Gulf. If so, however, we will not go like ‘dumb, driven cattle.’ We will adopt old ‘Scorch’ Isom’s tactics when the Gourdsville boys doubled on him; we will ‘advance backward’ into the briny tide and die with our ‘backs to the *flood* and feet to the foe.’”

“Huzza! Three cheers! Score one for Howard!” exclaimed the party, laughing and clapping their hands. “Didn’t know you were an orator, old fellow! Or a politician! Or a strategist—and *such* a strategist! We mustn’t lose your talents; we will have to make you a grand mogul; and as a beginning we shall press you into service as the captain of our company!”

“Thanks—thanks, boys!” replied the gentleman,

under the command of Mr. McCook, to take the captured vessel, officers and crew to Norfolk, Va. Mr. McCook stated to Dr. Granville R. Lewis, a gentleman of the highest character,—who, at this writing, is the universally esteemed and respected Superintendent of the Lynchburg, Va., Female Orphan Asylum,—that the vessel was owned wholly by Boston capitalists,—philanthropists of course,—and that the officers and crew were all New Englanders, and were, most of them, from Boston, New Bedford, and Marblehead, in Massachusetts. Ah! the terrible “sin of slavery!”

laughing. "But what has become of that righteous indignation which you invited me to help vent on old Longworth through his wine?"

"True; let us go," said Mr. Flournoy. "But did any of you know that cadaverous-looking fellow who stood near the end of the platform a moment since with a carpet-bag in his hand?"

"No; he's a stranger," replied one of the party. "A book agent or a patent-right tramp, no doubt. He seemed very much interested in a portion of Howard's high-treason oration, but did not look as if he fully approved some of the sentiments."

"Oh, I say, Fox," said Mr. Flournoy to a tall, fine-looking member of the party, with dark skin and very black hair, "can't you ride Howard's horse around to the hotel? We are going to make him stay with us to greet Monsh. We will await you at Smith's, for, as you are the 'Cyclops' of the 'Clan,' you must lead us in this onslaught."

"Certainly," replied the individual addressed, "I will ride the horse around, but pray excuse me from partaking of the wine. Were it the brewer I would gladly lead; but the non-arrival of the train makes me very solicitous about Monsieur; I fear there has been an accident."

"Oh, nothing of the kind! Monsh is all right. The trains are rarely on time since our political hubbub began. We shall expect you."

While the merry "rebels" are amusing themselves at Mr. Longworth's expense, except so far as one hundred *per cent.* added to the cash value of the wine is concerned, we shall take occasion to introduce the individual addressed as Fox. First, however, we will introduce "the young master," for Fox is a slave.

Charles A. Stewart, the gentleman whose arrival is expected, is the son of a wealthy and prominent family in Virginia. Having graduated at the University of his native State in the twenty-second year of his age, and having determined to live the simple and uneventful life of a planter, he was given by his father the best plantation that could be purchased in the distant land of North Alabama, where he had relatives residing, with permission to recruit fifty slaves from the Virginia farms and remove them, as his own, to the land of his choice. During the first four years of his domiciliation in Alabama he has become widely known among the young gentlemen as a daring rider, the most accomplished athlete, the best shot and the most indefatigable fox-hunter in the Tennessee Valley, and among the ladies as a true and chivalrous friend.

“Fox” is a nick-name, the real name of the individual, who is of French origin, being Cesare—Cesare Reynard D’Elfons. His mother was an octoroon slave, but, one-half of her base blood having been derived from the Indians, she had straight black hair, which she transmitted to her two children. She had been the property of a proud and haughty old French gentleman, who resided in New Orleans, and who, having been excluded for cause from association with the better class of his people, became a misanthrope, and spent the last ten or twelve years of his life in great seclusion, seeming to take pleasure in nothing, after his children became old enough to begin their education, but in assisting or superintending the masters employed for them, and in having the little girl to sing those plaintive French ballads which one may hear on any bright, pleasant night in the Creole portion of the Crescent City.

It was taken for granted by the few who visited the elegant D'Elfons mansion, which does not stand in the French portion of the city, that Cesare and Marienne were to be the heirs to his great wealth. But after his death, which occurred in a steamboat disaster on Lake Pontchartrain, the few humble friends of the unhappy octoroon and her children were surprised to learn that no papers, of any value to the family, could be found ; not even deeds of manumission from slavery. An effort was made by the humble friends of the woman, and by a few of the more influential friends of the haughty old Frenchman, to induce the heir-at-law, a very rich and miserly banker, to liberate and provide for the family, but without avail.

This heir-at-law was supposed to be the only living relative of the deceased. He so represented himself, and the usual legal advertising in such cases failed to bring to light any other. He was but a few years younger than the old gentleman, and had come to New Orleans ten years previously from France, poor and in need, but with papers to prove himself the old gentleman's nephew, the son of a half-brother, his only near relative who had left a representative.

As his arrival was a short time after the old gentleman's seclusion, or exclusion from society, he was welcomed with open arms, and was made a partner in the extensive banking business, out of which the old man had made his large fortune. Very soon the partner developed great financial ability, and in the course of a few years the business was given up to his exclusive control, and he enjoyed all the powers and privileges which an unlimited confidence and esteem could bestow.

There were none, who knew the old gentleman, who

believed it was his intention to leave the woman and her children in bondage ; but the most thorough search, by the proper officials, failed to discover any paper bearing on the matter ; and a few days after the unsuccessful appeal had been made to this unnatural relative, he sent them to the slave mart with the instruction that they were to be sold as a family to some one residing beyond the limits of the state.

Colonel Stewart, father of the young gentleman whom we have introduced, chanced to be residing temporarily at the St. Charles Hotel, and having heard the sad history of this little family, was prompted by curiosity and sympathy to visit them at the mart. He introduced himself to the proprietor, a Mr. Goodrich, with the assurance that he was prompted chiefly by idle curiosity in making this visit, as he had never before visited such an institution.

“ Well,” said the proprietor, “ as you’re all the way from Virginny, if you’d as soon pick up a bargain, when you find one, as not, I’ve some blooded stock here, sich as you don’t see twice in a lifetime. French—real *polly-voo* aristocrats—and a dead sacrifice, because they mustn’t live in the same state with their loving cousin. Come this way. Here, Marteel,” he added, to a demure-looking woman showing scarcely a trace of negro blood, and who was engaged upon some fine embroidery, “ tell this old gentleman what you’re good for.”

The woman looked up, and a blush suffused her cheeks as her glance met Colonel Stewart’s sympathizing gaze.

“ What is your name, my good woman ?” asked the old gentleman, kindly.

“ Mathilde, sir.”



“My name is not Mary Ann, sir; it is Marienne, and my papa was a gentleman.”

“Have you no other name?”

“My father’s name was Copeland—he belonged to Judge Copeland’s estate—and I cannot prove my right to bear any other name, sir.”

“Well, go on,” said the dealer, “and tell what you’re good for—sew, stitch, hem, embroider, keep house, fix up fine doings, wait on ladies, dress hair, and so on, *et cetera*. Healthy, too—sound as a dollar. Here, Marteel, let’s see your teeth—all white and sound, aren’t they?”

“Never mind!” said the gentleman, as a deep flush suffused the poor woman’s cheeks. “Is this sprightly youth your son?”

“Yes, that is her son,” said the dealer, “and as lively a little French imp as ever you set eyes on. Here, Seezar, trot out and give your p’int. What are *you* good for?”

“I can read and write French, English and Latin correctly,” said the boy, brightening up as he got a nearer view of Colonel Stewart’s benevolent countenance; “am a fair arithmetician and book-keeper, and know how to transact business.”

“Well,” said the dealer, contemptuously, “what is the good of all them gimcracks on a farm? Tell what you can do to earn your ‘hog and hominy’ on a Virginny plantation. Talk up lively!”

“Never mind,” said Colonel Stewart, kindly, seeing the youth at a loss for a reply. “Is this your little sister? She resembles you. Come here, little black-eyes,” he said, addressing the child, “and let’s get acquainted.”

The little girl gradually lost the frowning countenance with which she had quit her doll’s bed-quilt work, to observe the movements and countenance of the new-

comer; and when he smiled on her and held out his hand, she seemed suddenly to lose control of herself, and springing into his arms, she hid her head in his bosom, and sobbed convulsively.

“Hoity-toity, little miss!” exclaimed the dealer, “you mustn’t take liberties! Mary Ann! child! behave yourself!”

“My name isn’t Mary Ann!” said the little girl, looking up into Colonel Stewart’s eyes, as he stroked her hair, soothingly. “It is Marienne—Marienne Beatrice D’Elfons—and my papa was a gentleman. If he wasn’t dead he would take us away from here. Will *you* take us away, sir? Mamma will warm your slippers, Cesare will read to you, and I will make a *big* bed-quilt for you.”

“My child,” said the old gentleman, gravely, “you wouldn’t like to live in Virginia, where there are no orange blossoms, no cape-jasmin, and but few magnolias, and where the whole face of the earth is often covered with snow and ice!”

“I don’t like the cold, sir, but I like you,” said the child, naively. “You are so different from—” she glanced at the dealer, and, being unable to finish the sentence, hung her head in confusion.

“Oh, talk it out, little one!” laughed the dealer. “Of course the gentleman is different to me. He don’t have to make his livin’ sellin’ niggers. I feel sorry for you, too, as you ain’t used to it; but business is business. As you like the gentleman, I’ll knock off a hundred dollars—all my profit—on account of your poor little pitiful face hantin’ me around so. And when you get to Virginny, if there aint no orange blossoms and cape-jessymins in the winter time, you can have lots of

fun skeetin' on the ice, as I used to do up to Bost'n when I was as little and as innercent as you are."

"Will you take us, sir?" asked the child, looking appealingly into the old gentleman's eyes.

"First see if your mother approves your judgment, my child," said the old gentleman, patting her head gently, "and I will have a talk with Mr. Goodrich."

Scarcely were these words uttered before Cesare seized the speaker's hand, and with the impulsiveness peculiar to his blood, bent low and pressed it against his cheek.

"Ah ! Monsieur," he exclaimed, "you will take us ! You feel pity for my poor little sister and my heart-broken mother, and my heart shall give you its best love and service !"

After a short interview with Mr. Goodrich and a talk with the mother, Col. Stewart returned to the hotel accompanied by Cesare, and the next day the mother and child were removed to the servant's quarters at the hotel, and put in charge of Mrs. Stewart's apartments.

Life in the Virginia mansion was made as pleasant for the newly-purchased slaves as was possible under the circumstances, and two years after their admittance into the household, Fox accompanied the young master to the University of Virginia, in the double, and not unusual, capacity of valet and confidential friend and adviser.

During the prosecution of his studies the young master was stricken down with a severe epidemic fever, and Fox having written for Col. and Mrs. Stewart, by the advice of the attending physician, the patient Mathilde responded, in place of the mother, who was too delicate, at the time, to undertake the trip, and for weeks she nursed the young sufferer with a mother's solicitude, ten-

derness and hopefulness, when it seemed that no human aid could stay the ebb-tide of his life.

It is not to be wondered at, then, that, only one year later, when the amiable, patient housekeeper at the Stewart Mansion fell sick and was found to be on her death-bed, the warm-hearted young Virginian should have knelt by her bed-side and given her a promise that naught but death should part Fox and himself, and that conjointly they would take care of and watch over Marienne.

From that time forward the two young men were rarely separated for a day, at college or in vacation; while the unusually bright little Marienne was kept quietly at home learning the mysteries of letters and harmony from the young mistress, the art of needle-craft from the seamstress, and the great virtue of neatness, order and general helpfulness, from the old mistress and the housekeeper; while she charmed all with her gentle ways and the plaintive little songs of her childhood, which she rarely failed to sing when alone about her daily employments.

In the year eighteen hundred and fifty-six, when Col. Stewart called for volunteers among his slaves to go to the cotton belt and establish under and for his son a plantation in the far-distant land of Alabama, where the average Virginia negro firmly believed the mosquitoes were as large as tobacco-flies and the slaves were fed on cotton seed, Fox assumed as his proper office the position of recruiting sergeant. He spoke eloquently of the flora and fauna of the lower lands of Dixie, but his eloquence availed little until he thought of the peculiar preferences of the negroes, and assured his skeptical auditors that the country was full of persimmons, paw-

paws, muscadines, summer-grapes, and black-haws ; and that 'possums were plentiful and, as a natural consequence, fat all the year round. This reconciled the negroes to the cotton-seed cake, which they persisted would, at least in part, be substituted for the staff of life, as that was the fashion of the country, and in a short time the requisite number was made up, with half a dozen thrown in for good measure. Marienne, who had graduated under her several domestic teachers, though now but little over seventeen years of age, after many tears at the thought of parting from all in Virginia, volunteered to accompany her brother and assume the position and duties of housekeeper to the new establishment in the distant *terra incognita*.



King Cotton.

CHAPTER II.

FOUL CONSPIRACY.

"Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes."—SHAKESPEARE.

*"Thou ugliest fiend of hell! thy healthful venom
Preys on my vitals, and drinks my spirits up!"*—HANNAH MORE.

IT has taken much more time to introduce Fox than was required by that individual to take Mr. Howard's horse around to the hotel and have him put to hay. As he passed near the depot building on his way to the "saloon," his attention was attracted by the ejaculatory clearing of a throat, and, looking in the direction from which the sound proceeded, he saw a slim, bony, but apparently stout individual, with high cheek bones, massive chin and small restless blue eyes, half crouching by the side of an empty box car, and making what Fox thought to be very peculiar gestures and grimaces at him. Not being accustomed to having his attention attracted in so novel a manner and being withal a little startled, he shouted out, angrily:

"What's the matter down there? Is anything wanted?"

"Ah! beg pardon," responded the individual, making a peculiar gesture to entreat caution. "Will you step this way just one minute?"

"What is it, sir?" said Fox, walking rapidly up to within a few feet of the queer individual, having first, however, calculated his ability to grapple with and overpower him if it should become necessary. "What can I do for you, sir?"

“Well, not much, I guess,” replied the individual, eyeing him closely. “I calculate the question had ought to be what can I do for *you*.”

“Well, sir ; what can you do for me ?”

“I *might* do a right smart and then I mightn’t,” replied the stranger, cautiously. “You are a friend to Mr. Deaderick ; and your name is—— Perhaps I’m mistaken,” he said, interrupting himself, as he saw a slight shade of something like anger pass over Fox’s face.

“I am Monsieur Cesare Reynard D’Elfons, sir,” said Fox, impatiently, “and you are—the Wandering Jew, perhaps. If you have any business with me, please state it.”

“Ah ! beg pardon,” replied the man, as his eyes fell to the ground ; “I mistook you for another party. Pray excuse me. No harm done, I hope.”

“That depends on circumstances, sir. I wish to know whom you mistook me for, and why you deport yourself in so peculiar a manner ; and also your name and business here.”

“Well, you see,” said the man, with some confusion, “I am the agent for a patent subsoil plow—selling plantation rights. I am also trying to sell the right to the state of Alabama for the manufacture of a patent hand-cuff ; can be made by any plantation smith, and is the very best thing out in that line. A gentleman promised to meet me here with a view to buying the territory of North Alabama.”

“Who is the gentleman, and why don’t you await him on the platform or in the station-house ?”

“That’s ‘*business*,’ sir !” exclaimed the stranger, with a wink. “Of course a real gentleman wouldn’t like it to be known that he was going to make money out of manacles

for niggers. But it's a big thing for the right kind of a man. I'll sell all of North Alabama for one hundred dollars; and plantation rights could be sold for, say five dollars each. Let me show it to you, sir; perhaps you wouldn't mind buying it yourself. You need never be known in it; could sell farm rights through agents, and for your own slaves only it is worth all I ask for the state."

"My good fellow," said Fox, with a compassionate smile, "you are performing a fool's errand. No man here would think seriously of giving you one cent for the whole territory of North America."

"Eh? What?" exclaimed the man, with a show of surprise. "Wouldn't your people use them if properly introduced and made cheap? Wouldn't *you* rather have them, for convenience, than to tie your slaves with ropes? Say, now?"

"We desire neither manacles nor ropes, and besides I have no slaves; I am a slave myself."

"Eh? What? *You* a slave! Holy Moses! And you *are* a slave and have been putting on high airs for a joke! Ha! ha! You played it fine, for I thought I'd waked up the wrong passenger! And you know Mr. Deaderick?"

"Yes."

"And you're a leader among the niggers?"

"Perhaps so."

"And your name is Fox?"

"That's what they call me."

"And you're not that Lord Mayor, *E Pluribus Unum* fellow you said you was? Ha! ha!"

"That's all right."

"Well, you're the best actor I've come across yet; but Mr. Deaderick said you were no common nigger. Did you ever read any Abolition papers or documents?"

“Yes.”

“You *have*? Where’d you get ’em?”

“Through the mails.”

“Great snakes! Who was rash enough to send ’em through the mails?”

“Mr. Greely. My sister takes his *Tribune*.”

“Holy Moses! And how do you keep the boss from catching her at it?”

“Do what?”

“How do you keep the boss from catching her with the *Tribune* and skinning her and you alive?”

“Ah!” said Fox, while a new light shone in his eyes and the faintest ghost of a smile played around one corner of his mouth; “didn’t Mr. Deaderick tell you? We poor slaves have to do things on the sly occasionally.”

“Yes, yes; I understand. Is the boss a bad slasher?”

“What?”

“Does he whip much — lay on the rawhide lively?”

“Oh! Well, people *believe* that he does not, but — well, I prefer not to speak of that.”

“Ah, ha! And your sister;—Mr. Deaderick says—But what do you say on that subject?”

“I have nothing to say.”

“I understand,” said the man, with an expression of real compassion on his face, as he noticed and misinterpreted the flush that passed over Fox’s brow. “And now that we understand each other I will tell you I am not a handcuff dealer any more than you are that *E Pluribus Unum* fellow. So honors are easy; eh? Ha, ha! But tell me, why it is that your people, the slaves, being five or perhaps ten to one in this district, do not rise in your might and sweep these hounds off the face of the earth?”

“Do you know that ‘these hounds,’ as you call them, think one of themselves equal to a dozen of ordinary fellows, and do not fear death any more than you fear the mumps.”

“Well, what of it? That don’t keep ’em from dying like common folks if you put a ball or a butcher knife in amongst their vitals. It has always been a mystery with our people, considering that a man is but a man, how a few scurvy fellows can hold so many of your people howling under the lash.”

“Ah! sir, what can the poor slaves do? Their forefathers were torn from their beautiful tropical land and, under the dynamical teachings of slavery, had all the noble and natural aspirations of their souls crushed out of them. What, I say, can their children do whose intellects have been dwarfed and manhood crushed out by generations of vile servitude; whose only thought, for ages, has been to make their subserviency acceptable and pleasing to the dominant race; whose highest aspirations have necessarily been to fill the stomach and escape the lash; whose very natures have become so grovelling as to require that others shall think for them? What, I say, can they do without a master mind—a mind that has never been bowed down to grovelling littleness—to lead and direct them?”

“Such minds my people have always been ready and anxious to offer for your leadership; but the trouble has been that your people have’nt the pluck, or something, to follow their lead.”

“When have they ever been offered a fitting opportunity? Where in all the earth is there the unselfish philanthropist who would take his life in his hands and dare to become our Moses?”

“There are thousands of Moseses, but they can’t lead unless your people will follow.

“Show me one Moses of the right kind and I will show you four millions of followers.”

“Why didn’t your people follow John Brown? He was a Moses among Moseses.”

“Ah! the Virginia slave knows but little of the dark shades of slavery. Cotton and sugar, the slave’s curses, do not grow there, where the sainted Brown made his demonstration. Besides, there was a belief that Brown was not the right kind of a Moses—that he was actuated more by a hatred of the Southern white people than by love for the slaves, and that he desired to make tools of the latter for the punishment of the former. Even my dispassionate judgment does not acquit him of that damaging charge. But had he been a true Moses, the United States Government captured him before he had given the negroes a taste of blood and a chance to become ravenous.”

“If they had got a good fair taste of blood would they have pitched in?”

“Would they? Did you ever hear of the tigers in the jungles that once get a taste of human blood?”

“And would they have slain their masters?”

“I don’t know about the *masters*, but if Brown had attended to them he could have relied on the negroes to attend to the women and children.”

“Oh, bother the women and children!” said the man, with a look of deep disgust, “It is the *men* who stand between your people and freedom, and it is the men that we want attended to. You know that we are on the eve of a great war. A million of our men—*ten millions* of them if necessary—are ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes, if need be, to strike the shackles from your limbs. Your people could render us great assistance by operating in the rear, and if you do not——”

“What an unreasoning or uncandid people you are!” interrupted Fox, “Why should so many millions show a readiness to sacrifice life and all else to accomplish an object which could be accomplished, in a peaceful and legitimate way, by the sacrifice of a few paltry dollars, from each, to buy up and liberate all the slaves?”

“Umph! What would be the satisfaction,” said the other, impatiently, “of giving you your freedom, if the hounds who have oppressed you are not to be made to suffer? But I was going to say if in this war your people do not do something to aid us, and to show your manhood, we shall feel unspeakable contempt for you; and, though we will give you your freedom, it will be given you at the hands of our party, pretty much as a man would throw meat to a dog.”

“Yes, I can understand the feeling of your party on the subject. If we give you no aid your contempt for our pusillanimity will cause you to give us freedom pretty much as a man would throw his neighbor’s meat to a mangy cur; but I fear it cannot be helped. The white people here think that ten of themselves could whip a brigade of negroes, and, what is worse, the negroes think so too.”

“What do *you* think of it?” asked the man, pointedly. “You have the merest trace of negro blood in your veins. Do you think one master equal to a dozen or two of slaves, in fighting qualities?”

“Not if you give the slaves proper leadership.”

“Suppose you knew that the slaves here are slowly making up their minds to strike a blow for themselves when the proper time arrives; do you not think that you could furnish, in your own person, a proper leader for them?”

“To superintend the killing of a few harmless people and then ornament a gallows, as all such leaders have done? I should beg to be excused!”

“But, my dear sir,” said the man, earnestly, “things have changed from the old ruts. The power of the government is at last in the hands of our party, and the cry, ‘down with slavery and the slaveholder,’ has ten times the significance that it ever had before. Is it likely that we shall change to sucking doves now that we hold power in our hands? Soon this country will be overrun with our troops, and if you will become the leader of your people here and aid our cause, I solemnly promise that all the hanging to be done shall be superintended by the troops of the Government.”

“That, perhaps, would be a consolation to me on the gallows, as Brown was similarly honored,” said Fox, with a smile.

“Oh, you understand me,” said the man, impatiently. “You are no ignoramus. The United States troops captured Brown and old Governor Wise hung him. But the Government and troops are now on *our* side. They recognize Brown as a martyr, and are ready to hang all who oppose the march of the spirit which actuated him. Brown, and the able patriots and philanthropists who backed him, erred in striking too soon, but within a few weeks the proper moment for the blow which he and they desired to strike will arrive, as I can prove to you conclusively, if you will join our organization.”

“What is your organization?”

“We are liable to be discovered here at any moment,” said the man, looking around, uneasily. “When and where can you meet me for a long talk?”

“At any time and place you may choose,” said Fox,

earnestly, "but speak now as to your objects, and why you sought *me*."

"Well, I have heard from the negroes, and from Mr. Deaderick, that you are the most intelligent slave in the country, and that nine-tenths of them would follow your lead if you should join our order; and Mr. Deaderick advised me to see you in person, and to seek you here this morning."

"Has your organization any connection with the military force of the government?"

"No direct connection, as yet, with that or any department of the government proper; but it is fostered and put forward by those whose money and brains will direct and control both the government and the army."

"Who are they?"

"Every man, woman and child at the North who has money and brains, and is not a sneaking copper-head Democrat.*

"What are they doing?"

"The Democrats? Ha! What can they do? We have gotten up a furor over the Fort Sumter affair, and woe be to the Democrat who doesn't join us or else sing *mighty* low!"

"What are the objects of your organization?"

"Our single object is to organize you slaves, and to select good leaders, who will hold them well in hand until the armies of the North and South are about to join in one great battle. That will be your cue. The fighting men will be out of the country, and a very small force in each county will be sufficient to start the ball. The smoke of burning homes, and the howl that will go up from the land, will disband the rebel army in a day, and

* This, of course, was, to a considerable extent, a slander.

our troops will be in on time to attend to any hanging that may be necessary, and to install intelligent men like yourself into the civil offices.”

“My God, what a mons—, what a magnificent plot! To be candid with you, sir, I have been more than half inclined to ridicule your plots and plans as puerile; but your last remark opens up their fear—, their magnificent possibilities. Why, sir, twenty or thirty slaves, in each county, well organized, can strike more terror into the hearts of the Southern army, and route it more thoroughly, than could ten times their own force in battle array in their front; and do so without any serious danger of hurt to themselves, and without any more formidable weapons than the torch and butcher knife. I see the great opportunity clearly, and will join your order! When can I become a member, and where?”

“Do you know the Garth place on this road?” asked the man, exultingly.”

“Yes.”

“Do you know where the storm house is in the big field near Beaver lagoon?”

“Yes.”

“We meet there to-night. I am going on the train when it comes. Steal out one of your master’s horses and meet us there at midnight or a little before.”

“I’ll do it.”

“Conceal your horse in the woods; strike against a tree, so that we can hear you, thus: rap, rap—rap; and approach with your hat in your left hand.”

“You can depend on me, and—”

At this moment the plotters were interrupted by a loud call, which came from the rear of the depot building: “Hello, Fox! Where are you, and what are you up to?”

Running rapidly along the line of empty cars, Fox sprang lightly upon the long platform and, assumed a lounging attitude against the corner of the building, as the young men came around to the front.

"Go and get your wine, Fox," said Mr. Flourney. "We heard the whistle at the station above, and Monsh will be here in less than a moment."

"Thank you, sir; I don't care to indulge in—"

"Say, Fox," interrupted one of the party, "yonder is the carpet-bag fellow we have been talking about around at Smith's. Who is he?"

"I have been talking to him," replied Fox; "he is waiting for the train, but I don't believe he has a name."

"Eh? No name? What nonsense are you trying to get off now?"

"No nonsense, I assure you. I believe he is the Wandering Jew turned Puritan, and if ever I get a good chance I shall baptize him and give him a name. I'll call him Carpet-bagger."

This reply elicited a shout of laughter, which was partly drowned by the short, angry whistle of the locomotive calling for brakes. As the train slowed up to the station Fox ran forward, and, springing upon the rear platform, was the first to greet the young master.

CHAPTER III.

AN ECCENTRIC ACQUAINTANCE.

*"Absence of occupation is not rest ;
A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd.*

—COWPER'S RETIREMENT.

*"When you have met with three cups to drink,
Drink your three cups."—CHINESE POET.*

BEFORE our expected traveler shall be greeted by the friends awaiting him, we will go forward to meet him at Huntsville, and have a ride with him from that interesting and picturesque little city. We find the train waiting upon a side track, while the passengers are in the hotel regaling themselves with "beef-steak and coffee, poached eggs and canned oysters." The young man in question, a tall, well-proportioned, graceful person, with dark hair and eyes, and a melancholy, or what is sometimes described as a "haughty," expression upon his regular, handsome features, is leisurely promenading the front portico of the hotel and languidly puffing a fragrant cigar. A youth of less than twenty years of age, who has just come from the direction of the waiting train, approaches and addresses him respectfully :

"Have I the honor of addressing Mr. Stewart, of Alabama, sir?"

"That is my name, sir, and I reside in this state," replied the gentleman, politely, taking the cigar from his lips.

“My name is Lacour, from Louisiana, sir, and the lady with whom I am travelling requests that you will do her the kindness to let her see you in the rear coach when you feel disposed to go aboard again.”

“I will go with you now, sir,” said the young man, throwing away his cigar. “The lady you speak of is ——?”

“An invalid, who is just returning from Philadelphia, sir.”

“An acquaintance whom I have not yet observed on the train, no doubt.”

“No, sir; an entire stranger to you, I fancy.”

“May I ask to what I am indebted for the honor of the request?”

“Really, sir, I cannot say. Perhaps only to caprice. I am only her friend and travelling companion.”

Without speaking again, Mr. Stewart followed the youth to the rear car, and to a seat covered with soft shawls and wraps, upon which reclined a pale, fair, handsome woman, neither young nor old, but to all appearances a confirmed invalid. The youth addressed her as he prepared a seat fronting her for the occupancy of the new-comer.

“Madam, I have the honor to present to you Mr. Stewart, of Alabama.”

“I thank you, Mr. Stewart,” said the lady, in a soft, musical voice, as she motioned him to be seated, “for your kindness in humoring the whim of an old woman. No; do not speak. I know what you would say, and it is true that I am not so very old in years, but I am very, very old in the age which ill health and trouble give; and I sometimes presume upon it, as in this case, with as much confidence as if I possessed that better age which only long years, usefully and unselfishly spent, can give.”

“Madam, permit me to say ——”

“Yes, yes ; I understand,” interrupted the lady, “and while I do not consider the utterances that are prompted, if not demanded, by gallantry, as unpardonable violations of candor, we will, if you please, dispense with them. Excuse me, but it seems to me the expression of merely conventional compliments would ill comport with the sincerity and candor which I read in your countenance.”

“Madam,” said the young man, with a slight color rising to his cheeks, “are you altogether generous in denying to me the use of ‘conventional compliments’ while you yourself ——”

“No, no,” again interrupted the lady, “you do me injustice. Flattery is as foreign to my character as joy and peace are to my heart and mind. Were you ever in New Orleans ?”

“I have been there often, madam,” replied the young man, with a slight smile at the suddenness of the question.

“Ah ! I see you think I am indulging a frivolous curiosity, and I must admit that very few actions of my useless life have been prompted by any sentiment more worthy of commendation. I have lived for myself alone, and no one can do that without wronging others, in a greater or less degree, and having those wrongs to recoil, in effect, upon the offender, and load the mind and soul with a burden of conscious inanity. You deem me, I know, egotistical and eccentric, but all invalids are egotists of necessity, and selfishness is the foundation stone of eccentricity. Are you a native of Alabama, sir ?”

“No, I am not, madam,” replied the young man again, with a barely perceptible smile.

“Of what State, then ?”

“Of Virginia.”

“Virginia! Merciful Heaven! Then he *is* the —— Ah! excuse me, Mr. Stewart,” exclaimed the lady, with some confusion, “I have a habit of thinking aloud and of becoming excited over the merest whim or fancy. Were you in New Orleans in the winter of ——. But no, you are too young! Was your father ever there?”

“Only once, I think.”

“And that was in the year of ——?”

“Of 1849 or ’50, I think,” said the young man, filling the enquiring pause.

“Did he go there on business?”

“No, he went for my mother’s health.”

“Did he *transact* any business there?”

“No, I believe he had none there. He bought a family of slaves, however, while there. A poor Creole woman and her two children, whose sad history moved his compassion.”

“What was their sad history?”

“They were left slaves, in the eyes of the law, because one Monsieur D’Elfons, whose large fortune they had a right to believe was their own, died without making a will, or executing any other paper for their relief and benefit.”

“Ah! that was indeed a sad tale,” exclaimed the lady, compressing her pale lips and putting her handkerchief to her face. “Are they still living?”

“The mother died six years ago, but the children are both living.”

“In what State and with whom?”

“With me, here in Alabama; within less than a score of miles of us at this moment,” replied the young man, glancing at the landscape which seemed to flit by so rapidly.

“Have they relatives?” asked the lady, with a faltering voice, as she again covered her face with her handkerchief.

“Yes, the almost princely fortune which should be theirs is enjoyed by a base ingrate in New Orleans, who is a near relative. May a righteous Heaven temper justice with mercy when it comes to deal with that poor groveling soul.”

“Merciful God, have pity! But you do not know — Oh save me! save me!” shrieked the lady, throwing her arms wildly above her head.

The latter part of the exclamation and the gesture appealing for help, were occasioned by a tremendous bounding and bumping of the coach, which had become derailed, and which finally, breaking the coupling, rushed down a slight embankment and turned over on the side. Mr. Stewart, understanding instantly the nature of the accident, and seeing that the car, if it turned over, must fall on the side opposite to themselves, seized the lady around the waist, and lifting her into a clear space, forced her downward, and still holding her firmly braced himself to receive the coming shock. By this means he undoubtedly saved her and himself from serious injury, as there were but few others who were not more or less injured.

Fortunately no lives were sacrificed, and no bones broken, and only a few minutes were necessary to relieve the disabled coach of its demoralized freight. Some time was consumed in attending to the wants of the wounded, and in getting them comfortably on board the other coaches. After rendering all necessary assistance that seemed to be required of himself, Mr. Stewart approached the lady, who was lying where he had placed her, upon her shawls under the shade of a tree. Without alluding

to the remarks which called forth her passionate exclamation, at the moment of the accident, she quietly asked :

“ Mr. Stewart, isn’t slavery a great sin, and curse to our land ? ”

“ I am not disposed to say that it is not,” replied the young man, musingly. “ And yet the condition of the most degraded slave in the South is infinitely preferable to that of his brother in Africa ; for in addition to his greater enjoyment of physical comforts, he has the blessed hopes vouchsafed by the Christian religion. Both these, I earnestly believe, he enjoys more unreservedly and in a higher degree than the poorer peasantry of any country on the globe. He knows, no matter what may befall, that, so far as his physical comforts are concerned, he will never suffer the pangs of hunger nor the pinchings of cold ; nor for the want of a roof to shelter his family, however numerous and helpless ; and that when the decrepitude of age shall overtake him he will be nursed and provided for in his second childhood as he was in his first.”

“ Yes ; but the thought of being a human chattel, and of having one’s destiny entirely in the hands of others ; and, worst of all, the fear and danger of the separation of happy families ! ”

“ Ah ! the latter part of your remark touches the one dark spot in our system of slavery, which, in all other respects, is the least objectionable and the mildest form possible. The laws of all the states protect the slave from wrong in all things save the dismemberment of his family. But public opinion, which is as potent as law, except with the degraded, protects him there ; and it is very rarely the case in the distribution of a large estate that parents are separated from their unmarried children ;

and in nine cases out of ten, where there seems a necessity for such separation, it is cheerfully acquiesced in. But for the political excitement that was gotten up many years ago upon the subject of slavery, and is now about to bathe our country in blood, the laws regulating the system would be to-day much more favorable to the slave than they are.”

“How has that excitement had any influence upon the laws?”

“Do you know that slavery in the South has been productive of but two insignificant insurrections, not including John Brown’s effort, and that both these were brought about by emissaries from New England, and were instigated by incendiary addresses and other publications, emanating from the anti-slavery societies there, which were secretly circulated among the negroes—a happy, contented people, whom the laws of the land would not have suffered to be punished with stripes upon such evidence as once condemned Christian leaders and teachers to cruel deaths by torture in Massachusetts? Those insignificant insurrections, which resulted in the butchery of a few women and children, opened the eyes of the Southern people to what might be possible if they did not make an earnest appeal to that law which is the first in nature’s code. The constitution of the general government forbade the states to pass such laws as would have protected themselves from those incendiaries and their literature; and they were forced, in self defence, to pass laws which operated directly upon their slaves. As we could not stop the influx of this pernicious and dangerous literature, a disabling of the intellect to acquire its poison was our only recourse. Against the spread of the leprosy of murder, rape and arson, we were forced to use the vaccine

virus of enforced ignorance. Accordingly, laws were passed forbidding the opening of schools for slaves and forbidding owners to suffer their slaves to attend schools. And laws, already on the statute books, forbidding the sundering of family ties, were repealed because the demoralization resulting from the teaching referred to, which was well known would be continued orally, would make it necessary, occasionally, that a vicious negro should be removed from those over whom consanguineous ties naturally gave him an influence. This was hard upon the poor negro, but the peculiar circumstances of the case made it necessary that he should suffer this wrong for the good of society and for his own good. Thus you see the unscrupulous enterprise of our Puritan brother—he whose microscopic gaze detects motes in the eyes of all the world, while the beams in his own, he fondly believes, the world will mistake for acromatic lenses—has done us a great wrong and has forced us to do the poor credulous, impressionable negro a greater, if that were possible.”

“Ah! sir,” said the lady, sadly, “I have often wept over the troubles between the North and South. I belong to both sections, and my feelings are exemplified by Tupper’s beautiful idea of ‘thought weeping over early affections.’ Often have I prayed that the South might have, with all her other noble qualities, the self-sacrificing magnanimity and lofty patriotism to abolish slavery of her own volition. But, alas! two noble peoples are about to rend and destroy each other simply because they cannot or will not know the goodness in each other’s hearts.”

“We can only know what is in our own hearts,” replied the young man, with a sigh. “We have proved our self-sacrificing magnanimity by allowing New England to

bleed us for the benefit of her manufacturing industries, and have proved our lofty patriotism by sending the flower of our land to fight—practically almost unaided by that section—the battles of the nation. We have sacrificed our colonial prosperity and supremacy, and have ignored, and silently submitted to the denial of, the great natural superiority of our section; all in the interest of peace and so-called patriotism. Did we form the government only to do sacrifice to it; and must we finally sacrifice all that is left to us—honor and manhood? God forbid! We can see our land, our homes and fortunes, wrecked and ruined; the despoiler may rob us of all else, but our honor and self-respect we shall preserve!”

“All aboard!” cried the conductor, as the final preparations for departure were completed; and the young man was not sorry to escape from the thoughts which, to every Southern patriot, were as the broodings of a demonian incubus, which carried the sting of a scorpion in its tail.

“Mr. Stewart,” said the lady, after the train had again gotten fully under way, “tell me about the female slave—the daughter of the woman you spoke of. What is she?”

“Marianne? She is a capital housekeeper and seamstress, and as nice and genteel a girl as there is in the country.”

“Is she married?”

“Married? No. Who is there that she could marry if she had ever thought of such a thing? She has negro blood in her veins, but in all other respects she is immeasurably superior to any one who would think of offering to make her his wife.”

“How very different may be the feelings of a people

according to the different social sentiments which may have helped to form their mental and moral characters! Now, I should not consider myself superior to her. Indeed, when I am free to act, that is if——.Ah, how foolishly I chatter! You will think I have some very peculiar mental idiosyncrasies, if nothing worse. Tell me about the young man.”

“Fox is a little older than myself, and is one of the best fellows and one of the best business men in North Alabama.”

“Fox? That is a singular name.”

“It is only a nick-name. He was named for his father Cesare—Cesare D’Elfons.”

“Cesare D’Elfons! Ah; *mon Dieu!*” exclaimed the lady, with a shudder, looking out of the window; then suddenly turning and looking full into the young man’s eyes, she asked, “Mr. Stewart, will you permit me to visit you?”

“I am but a bachelor, madam,” replied the young man, with some embarrassment, “but if you will honor my house with a visit Marianne will be glad to entertain you, and I shall feel highly honored.”

“I thank you for the permission, but I cannot go now. I shall come when—that is, after—ah! I do not know when I shall come, but I shall come. And now,” she added, drawing off her traveling glove, and taking a large solitaire diamond ring from her finger, “will you allow me to present this, and make you the bearer of it, to Marianne? I feel a—an interest in her, and would be glad to have her wear this, by which I could recognize her, should we ever meet accidentally.”

“I hope, madam,” replied the young man, with a look of surprised embarrassment, “you will excuse me if I must,

in Marienne's name, decline to receive so costly a present from one whose name I am unable to repeat to her, and whose interest in her history and welfare I shall be unable to assign a reason for. Besides, excuse me for saying, it is not a suitable ornament for one in her position to wear.”

“Yes, yes,” exclaimed the lady, as if speaking only to herself, “she is a slave—a slave. Marienne D’Elfons—Cesare D’Elfons—slaves!”

At this moment the whistle sounded for Mr. Stewart's station, and that gentleman, excusing himself to his eccentric acquaintance, who seemed under the influence of a sudden fit of abstraction, went into a forward car to look after some small articles of baggage. The train had begun to slow up before he reached the rear car on his return, and as he approached the lady's seat the rear door was thrown violently open, and Fox rushing forward seized his hand and gave him a hearty and somewhat boisterous welcome.

“Ah! Fox, old fellow,” exclaimed the young man, returning the greeting with equal warmth, “you don't know how delighted I am to be back and with my own people again. But let us get out of this before the boys come crowding in here. Madam,” he added, turning to his nameless acquaintance, “I regret that our pleasant acquaintanceship is so soon ended, and sincerely hope it may be resumed at some future time. As you have shown some interest in his history, and that of his sister, will you allow me—to—to introduce——”

“I was about to ask you to do me the kindness,” replied the lady, filling the pause and turning very pale.

Fox was formally introduced, and Mr. Stewart, having spoken the usual words of compliment and leave-taking,

left the two in conversation, and hastened to meet the party who were about to board the train in search of him.

“Mr. D’Elfons,” said the lady, with great embarrassment, “Mr. Stewart has given me a part of your history and that of your sister. I feel much interested in you both—more than I have ever before felt in persons who were not known to me personally. Is your sister quite well and happy?”

“Quite so; thank you, madam,” replied Fox, politely.

“And you; are you contented and happy? Do you never pine to be free?”

“Free from the curses pronounced upon the human family in the Garden of Eden? Yes, madam.”

“And free from slavery?”

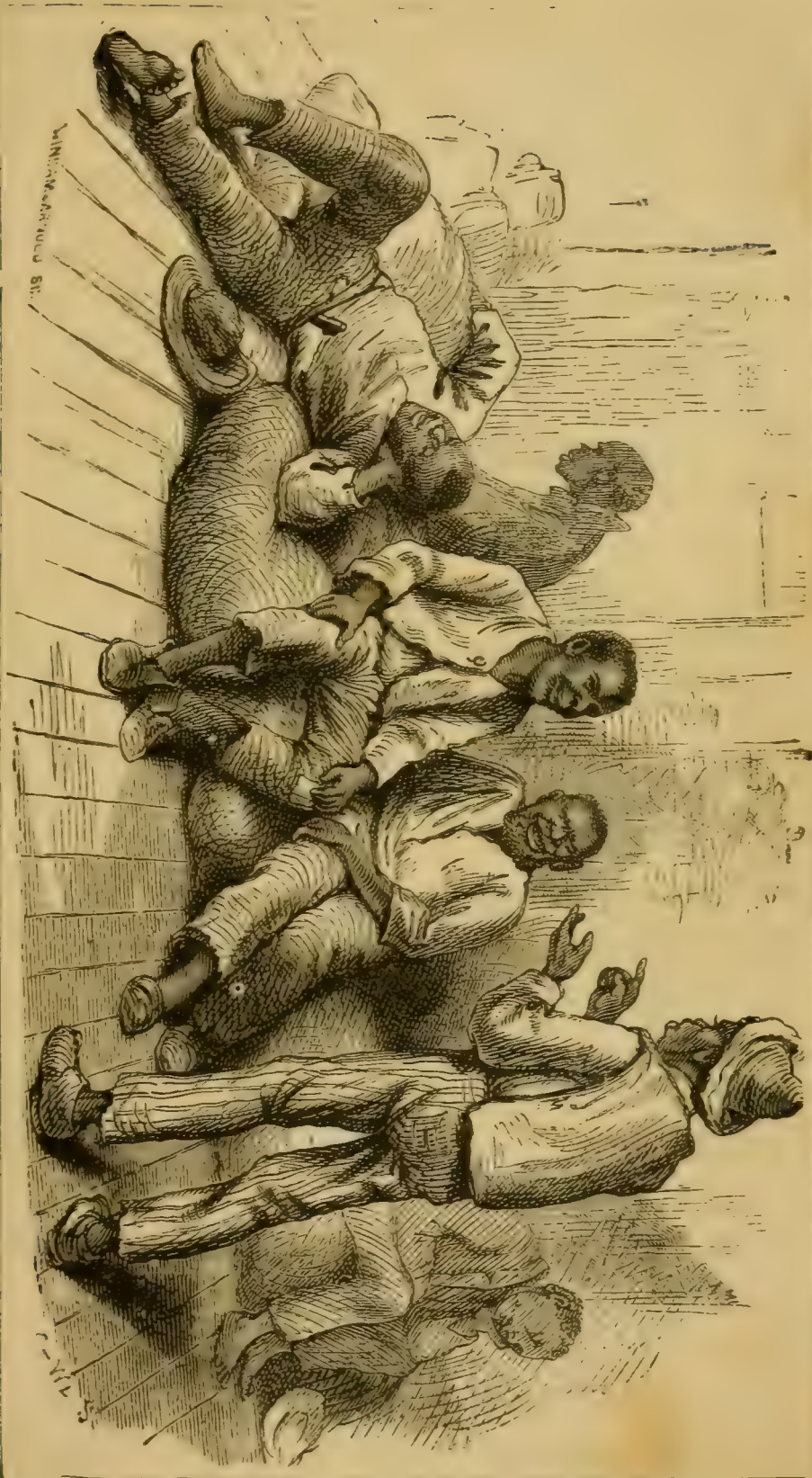
“Who can be free from slavery? All men are slaves! When God expelled Adam from Paradise and pronounced the fiat that his seed should eat bread in the sweat of their brows, he passed the sentence of slavery upon all the human family.”

“That is true in a certain sense, but you are a chattel slave. If all men are slaves, you are the slave of a slave!”

“And yet I am more free than the friend and gentleman whom the law calls my master. He has cares and anxieties, trials and perplexities, which cannot be known to me, except such as regard for him shall cause me to feel on his account. So you see the chattel slave—the slave of a slave—is more nearly free than any other human being can be; he is free from care!”

“That is an enviable kind of freedom!”

“Indeed it is! I had a few weeks of care in my early boyhood, and it was terrible. Shakspeare asks us, ‘What’s in a name?’ Mr. Stewart owns more than fifty slaves.



“He is free from care.”

They owe personal service to him, and in return he assumes all of their cares for the future of time, and considers himself, to a certain extent, accountable for the well-being of their souls hereafter. How many real slaves are on that plantation? One!”

“And Marienne; does she think and feel as you do?”

“I haven’t a doubt of it. But excuse me, madam,” he added, springing to his feet, “the train is moving and I must say adieu.”

“Farewell Cesare,” said the lady, growing very pale and extending her hand. “May God bless Mr. Stewart’s household, and you and your sister particularly. We shall meet again, before very long perhaps, but it would be wicked and unfilial in me to hope so; and yet I long to meet Marienne; to press her—— Ah; pardon me!” she exclaimed, suddenly seizing a small package and handing it to Fox. “This is your sister’s! Young men are so forgetful!”

Fox, supposing the bundle to contain some small present for his sister, which Mr. Stewart had probably been showing to the eccentric lady, dropped it into his pocket, responded to the last words of leave-taking, and sprang from the coach as the train had begun to acquire speed.

CHAPTER IV.

A GENTLE PURITAN.

*"Thine is a face to look upon and pray
That a pure spirit keep thee."—WILLIS.*

*"She'd baffle painters to decipher
Her exactly, as bad as agues puzzle doctors."—ROBERT NEVILLE.*

"MISS FLORENCE, ole Marster says, ef you please, to step down to de private parlor."

"Jane," said the young lady addressed as "Miss Florence," looking at the servant with mild reproof expressed in her gentle blue eyes, "has not Dr. Hansel directed over and again that you shall not speak of him as 'ole Marster?'"

"Yes, Miss ; but I never kin git used to callin' him no 'Dr. Hansel,' an' dats a fack."

"Why not, pray?"

"'Cause it 'pears like I's puttin on white-folkes a'rs."

"Well, if Dr. Hansel chooses for you to put on 'white-folks' airs,' it is your business to do so, I imagine."

"Oh no, young miss ; dars where you's mistaken ! He hired me to 'tend de do', fix up de parlors, wait on you ; dats three," said the girl, counting on her fingers, "an' fill up de lamps. Dats fo', an' draps on dis little finger, an' dats de een of all de businesses !"

"But," said the young lady, with a faint smile, "if you do not consider it a part of your business to conform to his wishes in every particular, I should imagine you could

have no objection to his trying to make a human of you.”

“Human ! What is I ef I ain’t a human ?” exclaimed the girl, indignantly. “What does our own white folkes build meetin’ houses an’ hire preachers for us for ef we ain’t humans ? An’ what does dey take de sacrament an pray wid us for ef we ain’t humans ? Umph !”

“Of course you are, Jane !” said the young lady, apologetically ; “I would be one of the last in the world to deny the fact ; and my only object in the silly remark was to stimulate your self-respect. I meant no offense ; pray excuse me.”

“Lawd, young mistis, how you does talk !” exclaimed the good-natured girl, “I ain’t mad ; an’ ef I was I couldn’t stay mad wid you no longer dan I could wid Muscadine preserves, an’ dem is de *sweetest* thing in de world. But I thought maybe you believes what Mars’ Majer Anderson’s carriage driver—dat yaller-face Sawney—says ’bout niggers.”

“And what does Sawney say ?” asked the young lady, amused at the quick transition of the girl’s countenance from clouds to sunshine.

“He says dat niggers ain’t humans ; dat once in Guinny or Novy Scoshy, or some whar dat monkeys lives, one ole outlandish man kep’ a store, an’ de monkeys kept stealin’ his whiskey, till bimeby he come home one day an’ ketched a whole passel of ’em dead drunk ; an’ he thinks if monkeys can drink whiskey, like folkes, dey can work like folkes, so he took an’ whacked off der tails an’ put ’em to hoin’ cott’n ; an’ dat was de beginnin’ of niggers. He’s a fool—dat Sawney is !”

“Very ridiculous indeed ! But you can go now, Jane,” said the young lady, scarcely able to repress her desire to

laugh outright at the girl's earnest indignation. "Please say to Dr. Hansel that I will be with him in a few moments."

The foregoing dialogue occurred in a private room of the "Atheneum," a large female school in the quiet little county town of Barrensville. As its name was doubtless intended to indicate, the little town is situated in a region of country known as the Barrens; not because it is actually barren, (for it is covered, where the timber has not been cleared off by small farmers, with a heavy growth of majestic trees of the usual forest varieties, including walnut and hickory,) but because the soil is less fertile than in other portions of the country, and is adapted only to the production of the cereals of the South. The soil being quite porous, affords free percolation to the heavy annual rain-fall, and furnishes no marsh surface as a lurking-place for pestilence-breeding malaria, except here and there, in widely-separated localities, where white or blue fuller's-earth may be found superincumbent upon the porous stratum. The topography of the country is gently undulating, with here and there precipitous little declivities along the margins of transparent little streams, some of which, abounding in "trout," or black-bass, and other game fishes, form chains of clear, cool, shadowy pools or lakelets, generally of considerable depth, connected by beautiful stretches of swiftly-flowing but limpid and noiseless water. Of course, the region is healthy, as well as beautiful, and furnishes the essential requirements of a location for a temple dedicated to the mental training of the dainty daughters of the lordly planters.

At the time of which we speak, three-fourths of the inhabitants of the village were wealthy planters, who resided there permanently, for the benefit of the whole-

some atmosphere, and with a view to educating their children, without depriving them of the hallowed influences of the home circle ; while other planters in the surrounding country, who from choice or necessity resided on their properties, patronized the school very liberally.

The present President, Dr. Hansel, had been the principal for less than two years. He had obtained the position through the influence of Messrs. Banks, Conrad & Co., bankers and brokers, of New York, Mr. Conrad being a nephew to Mrs. Hansel, and a personal friend to Mr. Stewart, whom we have already introduced to the reader, whose acquaintance he had made at the University of Virginia, which was also his *Alma Mater*. Mr. Conrad had heard, accidentally, of the vacancy through his friend, and through him made the successful application for his relative by marriage. Dr. Hansel, in middle life, had married a Mrs. Seymour, the widow of Mr. Conrad's uncle, who had been a stock broker of great wealth, but who failed and died when his little girl Florence was less than two years old. During the first year of Dr. Hansel's incumbency he held himself very much aloof from the society of the town and of the neighboring plantations ; but Miss Seymour, being cultured and refined, as well as sensible, unaffected and very beautiful, there was an earnest protest, on the part of the young people, against the light of her golden hair and soft blue eyes being hidden under Dr. Hansel's bushel of prejudice and asceticism.

“ Ah ! papa,” said Miss Seymour, bounding gracefully, and just a little boisterously, into the room in obedience to the old gentleman's request ; “ I fear I have kept you waiting, but Jane is so entertaining occasionally, and I am so ‘ primpy ’ sometimes, that occasionally I am behind time.

Do you wish to scold me for not practicing my harp lesson to-day? Oh, it is just too dreadful on the fingers! Makes corns or blisters, I do assure you!"

"Sit down, child," said the old gentleman, rather gruffly, but with a cold smile. "You are getting too old for those childish airs and graces. I have a serious talk for you. Mr. Deaderick has just left me."

"Oh, indeed!" replied the young lady, making a laughing grimace; "I suppose Mr. Deaderick would not stay to hear all of your 'serious talk,' so you wish to have it out on me!"

"Don't be silly, child. You know very well the object of Mr. Deaderick's visit," said the old gentleman, looking steadily at her.

"Indeed!" replied the young lady, with a slightly contemptuous toss of her shapely head. "I hope Mr. Deaderick does not presume to believe that I can be in any way interested in anything that may interest him."

"Why do you talk in that manner?" said the old gentleman, impatiently? "You know, as well as I do, that his visit had reference to yourself."

"Indeed! Does he wish to hear me deliver another homily on the sinfulness of slavery, while he assents, like a coward, to all that I say, but goes on buying more slaves all the same?"

"He is not buying more slaves. On the contrary, he recognizes his moral obligations in the matter, and is getting rid of his slaves. In a few months he will not own a slave."

"Oh, indeed! Is he freeing them?"

"No, of course not! He is doing what all other sensible Northern men here ought to and will do. He is selling them to the men here who are responsible for the

crime of slavery, and should be made to bear all the loss of its abolition."

"Is the man, who by the accident of birth is a slaveholder, more responsible for the crime than he who, through choice, comes to the South and purchases slaves?"

"Child, you do not understand these matters!" said the old gentleman, peevishly. "The forefathers of these people are chiefly responsible for the crime, and we intend to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, even down to the present generation. Does not Holy writ authorize us to do so?"

"Vengeance is *mine*, saith the Lord!" quoted the young lady. "But did not our forefathers establish slavery in New England, and even enslave the poor Indians—the owners of the soil upon which *they* were trespassers?"

"How foolishly you chatter!" said the old gentleman, with an angry frown. "If they did all this they afterward put free laws upon their statute books, and this relieves their children of any inherited curse on that account."

"History tells us that slave labor was not profitable in the poor soil and cold climate of New England. This being the case, is it fair or safe to take it for granted that the Father of All approved the motives of our forefathers in selling their slaves to the South and putting free laws upon their statute books, and that He has not only suspended the law with reference to inherited responsibility in their favor, but has even made them His chosen people to avenge similar crimes in others?"

"What in the name of common sense are you talking about?" exclaimed the old gentleman, with open-eyed astonishment and anger. "What do you mean by our forefathers selling their slaves to the South! Eh?"

"I mean," said the young lady, with an amused smile, "that in all New England only fifty-three *negro* slaves were emancipated by the law; the others being sold before the time appointed for the law to go into effect. But were this not the case—were our skirts entirely clear of sin in this respect—have *we* the right to punish these people for their sins, and to teach them a great truth which they do not desire to learn of us?"

"You are demented! You have lost your senses!" exclaimed the old gentleman, in astonishment. "Yes, it is not only the right," he continued, with angry vehemence, "but the duty of a highly civilized and God-fearing people, like ourselves, to correct error and punish wrong and crime wherever found!"

"But suppose the error and wrong be recognized and sanctioned by a solemn compact, and the would-be punishers a willing party to that compact."

"A compact with violators of God's holy law," replied the old gentleman, more mildly, "is *ab initio* null and void. In this case, as has been well said by our leading New England statesman, it is a league with Death and a covenant with Hell, which should bind no Christian people."

"Are we speaking of moral or political obligations?"

"Fiddlesticks! What's the difference? I pity the poor, God-condemned creatures, whose social crimes are such that they cannot make their religion their politics and their politics their religion. I am happy to say that our Puritan stock has always been able to do so."

"Were not our forefathers willing parties to the compact which you say has been styled a 'league with death, etc?'"

"Of course they assented to the terms of the constitu-

tion as the best compromise of conflicting sentiments and interests that could be obtained at that time. There could have been no union without such compromise. But they did not wait many years before they commenced to cultivate the sentiments which they knew would, in good time, produce the harvest that is now ready for the husbandman.”

“Did they sow the wind that we might reap the whirlwind?”

“Eh?”

“Did they sow bad faith and fanaticism that this generation might reap battle and murder, rapine and ruin?”

“What the dickens do you mean? Have you lost what little wit nature gave you?”

“I only mean to ask,” replied the young lady, in a suppressed voice, “if our forefathers were more ready to make solemn compacts or compromises than to be bound by their terms?” She paused a moment for a reply, but receiving none, continued: “I know nothing about politics but the little I have learned here, chiefly from pupils of the school. I could,” she continued, after another pause for the information desired, “find it in my heart to repudiate my maternal ancestry if I could believe that they had put on the lamb’s skin of innocence to make a compact, the spirit of which they immediately violated, and the letter of which they taught should be violated ‘in good time’ by their children, even though a brother’s blood should dye their hands and stain their souls.”

When the young lady ceased to speak she was unconscious that her mild blue eyes emitted a light such as had never been seen in them before: Could it be that contempt for the character of Mr. Deaderick, who for the

moment was perhaps her typical forefather and descendant, both in one, had caused her unwonted excitement and indignation? Dr. Hansel seemed to be revolving this problem in his mind, as he gazed at her angrily. Finally he said, in a voice that trembled with suppressed anger, not unmixed with contempt:

"You could find it in your heart to prove yourself a most egregiously silly little goose! What business have you to be talking about matters affecting your people with the simple little chits in this school? Our histories, written by our own literary men in New England, give you all that is necessary to know about the past of this country, North and South. But I did not send for you to hear you declaim your silly and unnatural nonsense. Mr. Deaderick has been here, as I told you. He is an honorable gentleman, well educated and wealthy—the wealthiest young man in the country—and would make a most desirable husband for any young lady, even the proudest in the land."

"Did he desire you to say that, sir?" asked the young lady, as the fire left her eyes and the sparkle of mirthful sauciness returned.

"Stop, young miss, you forget yourself," said the old gentleman, sternly.

"Pardon me, sir, I do," replied the young lady, with serious candor. "But I do not wish to be annoyed by Mr. Deaderick, either in person or by proxy. He is fine-looking, handsome and wealthy, but he does not possess one single quality which can recommend him to my regard."

"Regard! Bosh! Under ordinary circumstances, I should not urge you to marry any one; but in these times we must look facts in the face. Mr. Deaderick is very

wealthy, and you are very poor. It is true that I am making several thousand dollars a year here, and, so long as I am able, I shall support you in comfort. I intend to remain here and discharge the full duties of my position, but it is to be expected that the war will diminish my income very materially; and it may be that the school will be entirely broken up, and I be forced to seek other means of support for you and your mother. The money I have made here, so far, has all been sent to Hartford to release your mother's home, inherited from her father, from the mortgage we had to put on it before we came here; and if I should lose this income we would be beggars in a strange land. Your marriage with Mr. Deaderick will be a guarantee for the future to your mother as well as to yourself.”

“Ah! sir,” said the young lady, passionately, covering her face with her hands, “would you have me marry the man for his wealth?”

“Of course not, my child,” said the old gentleman, soothingly, “but I do not see why you may not ‘regard’ Mr. Deaderick. I know no handsomer man in the country; no gentleman more polished in his manners; and then his feelings and sympathies are the same as ours.”

“I pray you not to speak of him,” exclaimed the young lady, again burying her face in her hands, while something like a shiver shook her slender form. “I can never marry him! *Never, never!* The very thought makes my soul shudder!”

“Umph!” ejaculated the old gentleman, thoughtfully, wiping his spectacles and replacing them on his nose, “a shuddering soul may be bad enough, but I assure you a hungry stomach would be far worse. I hope you have

not allowed yourself to become interested in some unrepentant slave-breeder."

The young lady made no reply to this suggestion, but proudly raising her bowed head, she shook back her tangled ringlets, and walking to a window, looked out upon the back yard.

"I know," continued the old gentleman, observing her closely, "that young Stewart was somewhat attentive to you last winter, but, while I admit that he is rather passable looking, and possesses talents, such as they are, it is utterly impossible that you could have suffered yourself to become interested in him, bound as he is, body and soul, to the Juggernaut of slavery."

The old gentleman paused for a reply, but the young lady seemed interested in something going on in the kitchen yard, which she watched very attentively.

"Besides," he continued, with a frown, "there are some ugly rumors afloat respecting his moral character. His house-keeper, it is said, is a very beautiful Creole woman—his slave, but as white as any lady in the land,—who dresses very handsomely occasionally, and wears laces and jewels. You are aware that the authority of the master, and his power over his slaves, are almost unlimited."

Again the old gentleman paused for a reply, but the young lady was still intently gazing into the yard. The crimson which dyed her ears and the back of her neck, however, told him that she had not been an inattentive and uninterested listener to his remarks. After a few moments of silence, which the old gentleman did not seem to desire to fill with additional innuendoes, she turned, with composure, and looking into his eyes, said :

"Well, sir ; I am glad you have finished the serious

talk Mr. Deaderick gave you for me. He does me honor ! Oh, *so much* honor !" and with a stately courtesy, she turned to leave the room.

"Stop, young lady," said the old gentleman, angrily ; but as she seemed not to heed him, he exclaimed, vehemently, "Miss Seymour, I command you to stay ! You forget yourself again, miss !"

"Pardon me, sir," replied the young lady, as she drew the door open, and turning, looked into the eyes of the irate old man. "It is you who forget yourself," and the next instant she had closed the door, and was gone.

"Blood and fury ? My little Lady Macbeth !" exclaimed the old man, starting up as if to follow her ; but changing his mind he strided to a window and looked out, while his contracted brow and compressed lips told of more than a momentary emotion of anger. "Ah !" said he, finally, bringing his clenched fist with force down upon the window-sill, as if stamping his seal upon some document of portentous import, "she is no longer a child. I have to deal with a self-willed woman. Am I equal to the emergency ? By the powers, we'll see !"

Turning from the door the young lady ran lightly down the long hall, up a broad staircase, past several doors, and into the *sanctum sanctorum* of her own handsome little chamber, where, throwing herself, face downward, upon her snowy little couch, she burst into a fit of passionate weeping which, after the first paroxysm had subsided, gave no outward sign. Had she been called on at that time to give an analysis of her feelings and emotions, it would not have been possible for her to do so. She had, however, been made painfully conscious of two facts. First, that she loved Mr. Stewart ! Yes, *loved*, **LOVED** him ! And second, that she—well, yes, *hated*

Mr. Deaderick ! She recalled the fact that Mr. Stewart had never *spoken* to her of love ; but had her own timid coyness ever afforded him a fitting opportunity to do so ? Had not his eyes spoken ? Had not his soul telegraphed to hers, and didn't she now understand the sweet import of the messages ? Was it not possible, too, that her soul had telegraphed back the existence of a sentiment which her intellect believed to be only friendly regard, but which the two consulting souls knew to be *Destiny* ? Lastly, could her instincts be at fault, and had her soul enshrined an unworthy object ? Impossible !

She had lain for a long time mute and motionless, engaged in such thoughts and mapping out her future course, when the door was quietly opened by Jane, who entered, humming a tune in a subdued voice, with half a dozen towels on her arm. Suddenly starting, she exclaimed :

“ Lawd sakes ! young miss, how you did skeer me ! I thought you was a dead sperit ! An' bless de Lawd ef you ain't been cryin'. What's de matter, honey ? Is dat ole watsisname bin quarrelin' wid you ? ”

“ Jane,” said the young lady, rising to a sitting position and shading her eyes with her hand ; “ you must not speak in that way of my step-father. It is not respectful.”

“ 'Taint, honey ? Well, I axes *your* pardin' ; but you has des come from dar an' you's cryin'. How's dat ? ”

“ You are always on the lookout, Jane,” said the young lady, reprovingly, “ for some fault to find of my step-father. But did you ever have the toothache ? ”

“ Lawd, no, miss ; all my tooths sound es a dollar.”

“ Do yo know what is good for it ? ”

“ Ef my own ole miss was here she'd cure you 'fore you'd say 'Jackrobison.' I'll run for your ma,” said the sympathizing creature, dropping her towels.

"Oh, no ; don't do that. Here, just bind one of the towels around my face."

While Jane was adjusting the towel she ran on : "I's mighty sorry, young miss, your tooth hurts ; 'deed I is. Always makes me sorry ef anything's ailin' dem I likes ; and I likes you next to my own young miss—I does in fack. I wan't sposin' nothin' was hurtin' nobody, an' I was feelin' lively es a cricket on de hath ; and dar you was wid de toothache des rampagin' throo your jaw bone."

"What was making you feel so lively, Jane?" asked the young lady, lying back on the bed, and feeling that she would be glad to amuse herself in any possible way after her unusual turmoil of feeling.

"Why, Dick Styode was here 'while ago, an' he said Mars' Chyarles was comin' home to-morrer!"

"Well, what of that?"

"Why, don't you know he always gives his folkes a fish-fry in de spring?"

"Well?"

"An' dey always invites our folkes, an' you will ax ole wats—I mean ole Mars' Dr. Hansel to let me go an' stay all night."

"When does he give the fish-fry?"

"Ginerally when de red-buds is in blossom, for den the fust fishes runs ; if dey misses dat, dey has it when de dogwoods blossom, for den de red-fish runs, an' later on we has a plenty of trouts, goggle-eyes, an' sich, till frost."

"But when is the present fry to be?"

"Des as soon as Mars' Chyarles gits home an' dey can make de 'rangements."

"What arrangements are necessary?"

"Why, dey has to knock up a big flatform, bigger 'n

de concert hall, fix up de seins an' things, an' write to Huntsville for de ban' and fixins."

"Do you have a band to dance to?"

"Bless your innercent soul, honey, de ban' is to listen at! Ban' music is good enough for white folks to dance arter, but it's too slow for niggers."

"Why, don't you dance?"

"'Deed we does! But we dances arter de banjer an' fiddle. Niggers wants de music quick an' lively, so dey can fling foot in a hurry."

"Does Mr. Stewart dance?" asked the young lady, with a slight, self-condemning flush, while she re-arranged the towel around her face.

"Tee-hee!" snickered Jane, putting her hand over her mouth as if to arrest a more boisterous demonstration of amusement should it attempt to escape. "No'm! dat he don't! He looks like he's mos' too good to walk on God's green yearth, much less dance on a nigger's flatform!"

"What! proud?"

"No'm; not zackly proud; des sort 'er gran' like. Ef he was to git up dar and cut de pigeon-wing," she added, again putting her hand over her mouth, "I speck de niggers would faint. But he ain't what I calls proud, like ole watsis—I mean like some folks I knows. He wouldn't mind de little niggers feelin' in his duster pockets for nuts an' goodies—an' I has seed 'em do it many a time—but all de same when he walks aroun', de men can't help from takin' off der hats, an' de gals kurchey's."

"What does he do there, then?"

"You see, him an' Fox 'tends 'round an' sees dat de lemonade an' things is fixed up, de tables sot, an' so on; an' dat no stray nigger don't fetch no licker dar an' kick

up a rumpus ; but all hands 'haves demselves like gentl'men's niggers, es dey is.”

“I suppose Fox and his sister dance?”

“'Deed dey don't ! Dey thinks dey's mos' es gran' 'es Mars' Chyarles ! But dey can jabber dat outlandish talk—French, dat's what dey calls it—an' dey can jabber it like wild Injuns.”

“I suppose you can understand them only when they speak in English ?” laughed the young lady.

“Inglish ! Lawd, miss, I don't know nothin' 'bout no Inglish ; but dat gal can git away wid de Inglish an' all de balance of 'em—jabber jibber, jibber jabber—an' sing ! you des ought to hear dat gal sing !—make your har rise on your head !”

“Did it make yours rise?”

“Lawd, miss !” laughed the girl, “you's a makin' fun. My har has got de rale ole nigger kink in it. But her har is a heap straighter'n yourn, and as black as tar ; an' so is her eyes. You des oughter seed dem eyes once las' fall, at de barbecue, when Mr. Watyoumacallim Deaderick said somethin' sassy to her ! Dey fairly shined like fire coals, an' she flung dat outlandish jabber at him in sich a hurry dat he des sneaked off an' moped like a orphan puppy.”

“Sarcastic, is she ?”

“Yes, indeed ; ef dat means pritty ! She's as pritty as a picter—an' good, too. Las' fall, at dat same barbecue, one of dem Watyoumacallim Deaderick's gals said you was a Yanky, like her marster, an' I called her a liar, an' she snatched my hat off an' spilt all dem pritty flowers my own young miss gin me. Well, she—Marm-sell is what everybody calls her—took an' fixed, an' fixed, till dat hat looked real nice agin ; an' den she told Mars'

Chyarles Styode, an' he sont me a bran-new silver dollar, an' said I mustn't talk to dot ill-bred nigger no more. But, young miss," said the girl, looking mischievously at the young lady, "I niver ~~has~~ made up my mind whether Mars' Chyarles sont me dat dollar because he was sorry 'bout de hat, or proud 'cause I took up for you."

Miss Seymour, who had been highly amused by Jane's gossip, and had, for the moment, forgotten her troubles, grew suddenly serious as the last remark was made, and a crimson flush dyed her cheeks and brow, as she said :

"That will do, Jane. Perhaps mamma is wanting you; and I fear I've kept you too long."

"Yes'm, I must go, now," said the girl, pressing with her thumb and finger upon the corners of her mouth to obliterate the irrepressible footprint of a smile; "an' I's mighty glad you's got over dat toothache. Dat shows dat when talk gives folkes de toothache, talk kin cure it. I s'pose it 'pends on who de talk is 'bout, whether it makes folkes ailin' or cures 'em. Tee-hee!"

This good-natured snicker, fired from the door as it was being closed, was Jane's way of emphasizing the intimation, already given, that she had not been humbugged.

CHAPTER V.

A SOUTHERN HOME.

*"'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home."*—BYRON.

*"The first sure symptom of a mind in health
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home."*—YOUNG.

AS the little party which had gathered to welcome the wanderer wended its way to the one little hotel of the village that had slowly grown up around the railroad station, all seemed to have forgotten the cause of their gloom of an hour before, till one of the party exclaimed :

"Well, Monsh, we are all half dying to hear the news. Tell us what tidings you bring from the United States."

"Monsh" was Mr. Stewart's nickname. Fox and his sister had always addressed and spoken of him as Monsieur, which the young men of the country had abbreviated into that uneuphonious monosyllable.

"The United States," replied the young man, as a shade of sadness dispelled his smile, "have not for fifty years, I imagine, been half so truly what their name was intended to indicate as at present. Love of country, love of liberty, any love is a power in any land ; but I have ascertained in my trip North that there is a moving passion which is to love as the howling tornado is to the gentle zephyr. Our friends over the border are angry, very angry ; as angry as a caged animal should you attempt to rob it of the bone upon which it is feeding.

Ah ! the South is a rich, juicy bone, full of marrow, and those who are not angry because we are slave-holders, and yet their superiors in civilization and Christianity, are angry because they are about to lose their bone. Alas, for us ! our virtues and our rich possessions will be the cause of our undoing should we ever be undone. We should have nothing to fear from the howlings of our hereditary enemies were it not for the fact that the cry for "the preservation of the glorious Union," is the growl with which those who were the friends of honor, fair-dealing and constitutional government, and were consequently our friends, indicate their determination to hold on to the bone if they can. But my news will keep ; let us talk of pleasant things. Flournoy, what have you to say of the 'Maid of the Mist?'"

"I would say I am mist of the maid," laughed the young man addressed, "were not puns condemned as giving a taint of vulgarity to polite conversation ; but it will interest you more to know that Deaderick is selling off his people for the purpose, *they say*, of marrying the 'Cynosure,' and taking her back North. Excuse me, old fellow, for breaking this news to you so abruptly, but you know, 'misery loves company.'"

"Ah !" laughed Mr. Stewart, slightly coloring, "*they say*, tells wonderful tales to willing ears, but you can't have my harp to hang by the side of yours on the willow, my friend."

"Can't, eh ? Well, we'll see," laughed the young man. "But here comes mine host of the 'Rising Sun'—a Northern man with Southern principles—to welcome the prodigal, who has been feeding on the husks of 'the glorious Union.'"

"Hold !" laughed Mr. Stewart, as he greeted the

proprietor of the hotel. “You do Mr. Wilkins injustice to class him with the demagogues of the buried past. It is the Northern men with Southern principles and the Southern men with Northern principles, to whom, chiefly, we are indebted for the present position of affairs. Mr. Wilkins is an *honest* man, with *honest* principles. Of what leading national politician, of recent times, can we say as much, if we except Calhoun?—certainly not of Jackson, Webster, Clay, Douglas, or any of that class of political traders and trimmers, whose patriotism and statesmanship combined was but an effort to secure the greatest amount of personal popularity for the least expenditure of treachery to the true interests of the country.”

“Give us a rest, Stewart!” exclaimed Mr. Howard, laughing. “We call for bread and you give us a stone—for news, and you give us politics. Wilkins will give us some wine and cigars in his best room, and the oracle must come to order and speak.”

“I can give you half an hour,” replied Mr. Stewart, “and you shall all dine with me to-morrow. At present, I am impatient to see my people, and almost dying for a good long canter on Selim—no such horse-flesh as that where I’ve been.”

After the friends had spent an hour or more in pleasant conversation, and had agreed to meet on the next day at “The Oaks,” Mr. Stewart’s handsome and hospitable home, for dinner, the party separated, and Mr. Stewart and Fox, mounting their horses, two superb specimens of the old “Randolph stock,” carried from Virginia, and celebrated for speed and bottom in the chase, left the village, in that easy, graceful canter, peculiar to Southern riders, and indicative of thorough training on the part of both horse and rider.

As a rule, the young men of the South are remarkably fine riders. Naturally daring and venturesome, and delighting in manly sports and exercises, and being, withal, perhaps a little reckless of danger, and passionately fond of the chase, their importunities often procure for them the privilege of joining in the wild excitement and reckless riding of the fox hunt, at an age which, their indulgent mammas are aware, should still keep them under the gentle tutelage of the nursery governess. Hence, it is a common expression with them, that they were "raised on horseback;" and no gentleman, with sons, ever has an opportunity to employ a professional to "break" his colts, for generally before *pater familias* has thought of having some high-blooded young animal taken in hand, he will see, some fine morning, while the early frost sparkles upon the still green grass, the hope of the family ride him in from the chase, with smoking sides and a fox's brush tied to the saddle.

After cantering briskly for several miles along a straight and moderately level road, and talking of business matters pertaining to the plantation, Mr. Stewart changed the subject abruptly by inquiring:

"Fox, what is Deaderick's object in getting rid of his people?"

"It is said that he is to marry Miss Seymour, and that Dr. Hansel objects to her marrying a slave-holder," replied Fox, closely observing the effect of his words.

"Nonsense," exclaimed the young man, impatiently, "I chanced to know Miss Seymour, and I know she would feel extreme contempt for the man of easy virtue who would propose to atone for his share in 'the sin of slavery' by selling his slaves to other persons. As a question of living up to moral obligations, which is the more to be

commended, the man who keeps his slaves and takes care of them himself, or he who sells them to strangers, and raises a hue and cry for abolition?”

“Undoubtedly the former, but it is a peculiar characteristic of some minds that they will ‘strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.’ For instance, when I went to New England five years ago to buy some fine sheep for monsieur, your father, I learned that the first abolition society ever organized there had for its president a retired skipper, who had made his fortune kidnapping negroes in Africa and selling them in America, and the first negro insurrection in Virginia was instigated and brought about by that society.*

“Yes, these modern Ammonites, when they go down into the valley of Tophet, true to their ancient instincts, seek beyond the confines of their own land for subjects of sacrifice to appease the wrath of Moloch. This proves them profoundly wise, for if Moloch should not be appeased there will be no harm done—to themselves. But tell me of Deaderick; is he with us in these troubles?”

“It is my opinion that he is not, and that in selling his slaves he is ‘preparing for the wrath to come,’ as Mr. Howard expresses it.”

“He thinks we will fail in this war, and as he cares nothing for his negroes, except as regards the dollars which they represent, he deems it prudent to change the investment. Is that it?”

“I presume so. He was not born a slave-holder, and is not influenced by the memories of childhood and early

*This is literally true according to veracious New England tradition, which, so far as the writer knows, has never been contradicted.

boyhood, and knows nothing of those affectionate ties which, as a rule, exist between master and slave."

"Ah, here we are!" exclaimed Mr. Stewart, as he reined up in front of a large gate, which gave entrance into a broad and straight road leading through highly-cultivated fields to a handsome mansion half a mile away. "How delightful is the feeling, when one returns home after long absence, that everything around, animate and inanimate, is smiling him a welcome!"

As the two horsemen walked their horses leisurely up the level road, the scene before them was such as could not fail to elicit the lively admiration of any beholder. The old mansion, built many years before, rather with a view to comfort and the requirements of hospitality than with an eye to the niceties of architectural display, looked cosy and comfortable in its surrounding grove, or park, of twenty acres, more or less, of majestic oaks, walnut and hickory trees, standing far apart, and dotting with broad shades the smooth carpet of green turf. In the foreground of the lawn, two high-headed colts were scampering to and fro, ever and anon pausing to arch their beautiful necks, give a loud snort, and then scamper off again, rearing, pawing and plunging in mere wantonness of exuberant life and spirits, while several sleek and meek looking deer quietly cropped the velvety sward, occasionally raising their graceful heads to gaze wonderingly at the reckless equine roisters, or to point their delicate noses to windward in enquiring sniffs of the passing breeze. Upon the high arch of the gateway which gave entrance to the front lawn, a patriarchal peacock, with his Argus-eyed plumage demurely drooping, perched in solemn meditation, patiently awaiting some sufficient provocation to startle the slumbering echoes of the old house with his

discordant scream, while upon the broad, many-columned piazza of the gabled building, a female figure in plain, neat white, waved a handkerchief in welcome to the approaching horsemen. In the background, beyond the mansion, where lay by far the larger part of the grove, a broad avenue, or parallelogram, between two rows of neatly whitewashed cabins—yelept “nigger-huts” in the New England vernacular—was alive with a little troop of masculine imps of various ages, and dressed, for the greater part, in a single garment of white cotton, made somewhat in the style of an abbreviated Roman *toga-virilis*; climbing trees, see-sawing, playing “fox and hounds,” or tumbling, in disobedience of the duenna’s orders, in the dust; while across the fields, half a mile beyond, a dozen or more stalwart ploughmen, having just heard the welcome sound of the noonday bell, mount their frisky, braying, harness-encumbered mules, as twenty or more “hoe hands,” women and youths, lead by the patriarch of the plantation, scamper across the cotton beds, with the glad cry: “Yonder comes Mars’ Chyables!”

Without stopping at the front gate, Mr. Stewart, having waved a pleasant greeting to the comely figure upon the piazza, rode around to the “quarters” so as to receive and return the greetings of the humblest of his dependents first. After the ceremony had been gone through, with much hand-shaking and many extravagant demonstrations on the part of some of the younger negroes,—and as the young man stood on the little porch of the last cabin on his way to the house, with old “Mammy,” as he called his black foster-mother, still clinging to him, he said to one of the young men following him:

“Well, Dick, I see that you and Uncle George have taken good care of Mammy since I’ve been away, and

I've no cause to scold you, but I miss the usual heartiness of your broad grin. Has anything gone wrong; hasn't Fox given you all the usual fish-fry?"

"No, sir," replied the negro, "dat's 'pinted for nex' Sadd'y. But dat ain't it. I feels sorry for Henry. Mr. Deaderick is sellin' off his fokes, an we's feard he'd sell Henry's wife out o' de neighborhood, sir, 'fore you got back."

"Why didn't Fox go over and see about it?"

"We did ax him—mammy an' we all—but he said him an' Mr. Deaderick didn't gee hosses together, an' he would wait for you."

"Ah! I remember. Fox was right. But now that I am returned we will see about it. How is Henry's leg getting on?"

"He's still stayin' in de hospital at Mr. Deaderick's, an' Mr. Deaderick is right good in lettin' his wife tend to him. Fox sends over his rashens every week, an' de doctor is dar mos' every day. Mr. Deaderick says dat leg is done cost you more'n de whole nigger is wuf."

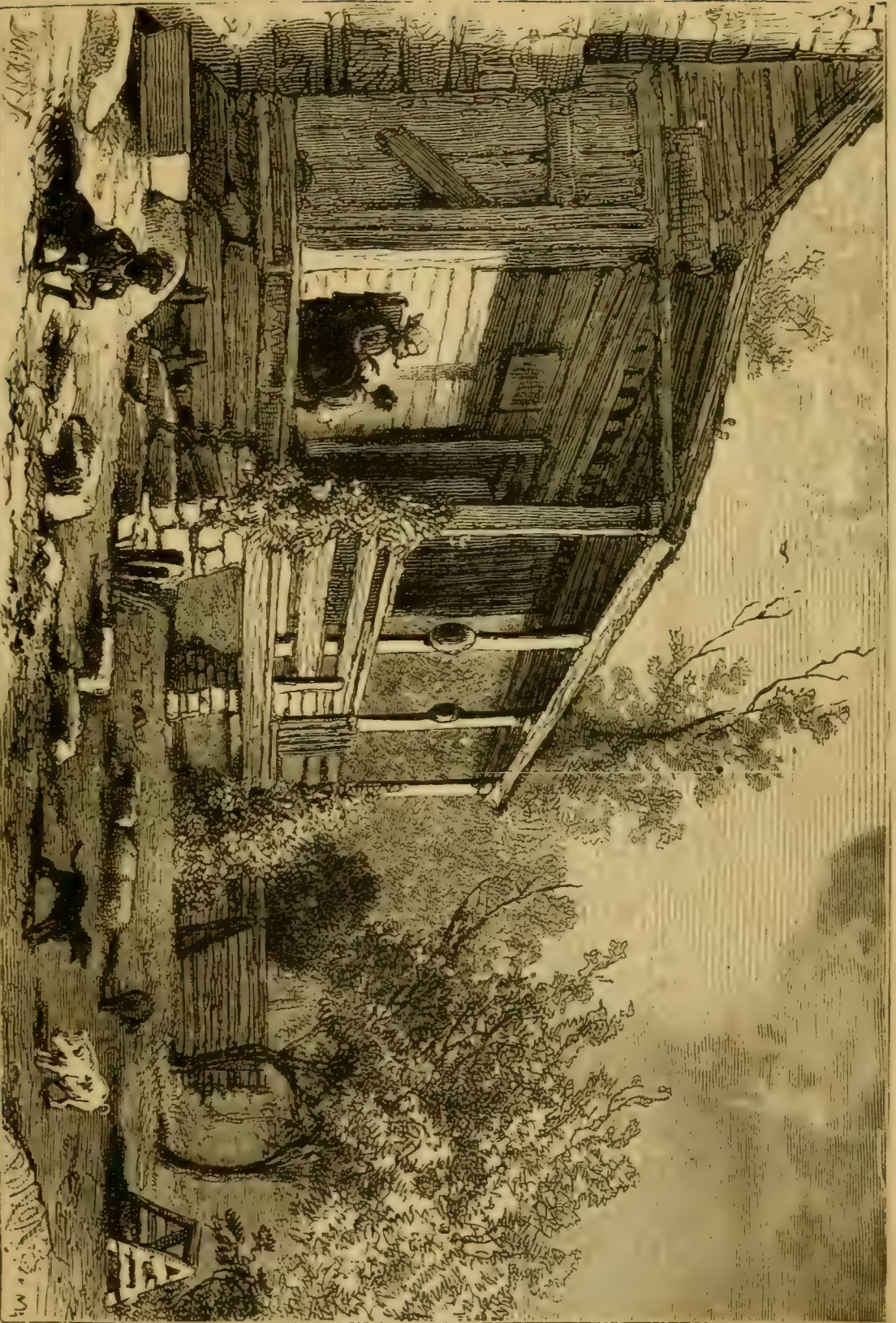
"Poor fellow!" said Mr. Stewart, smiling at this practical view of the matter. "If he does not improve under the doctor's surgery I shall take him to Philadelphia this fall,—that is, provided I can get there, and provided also the Abolitionists do not take you all away from me."

"What is dey got to do wid we all, Mars' Chyarles?" asked the negro, with evident curiosity.

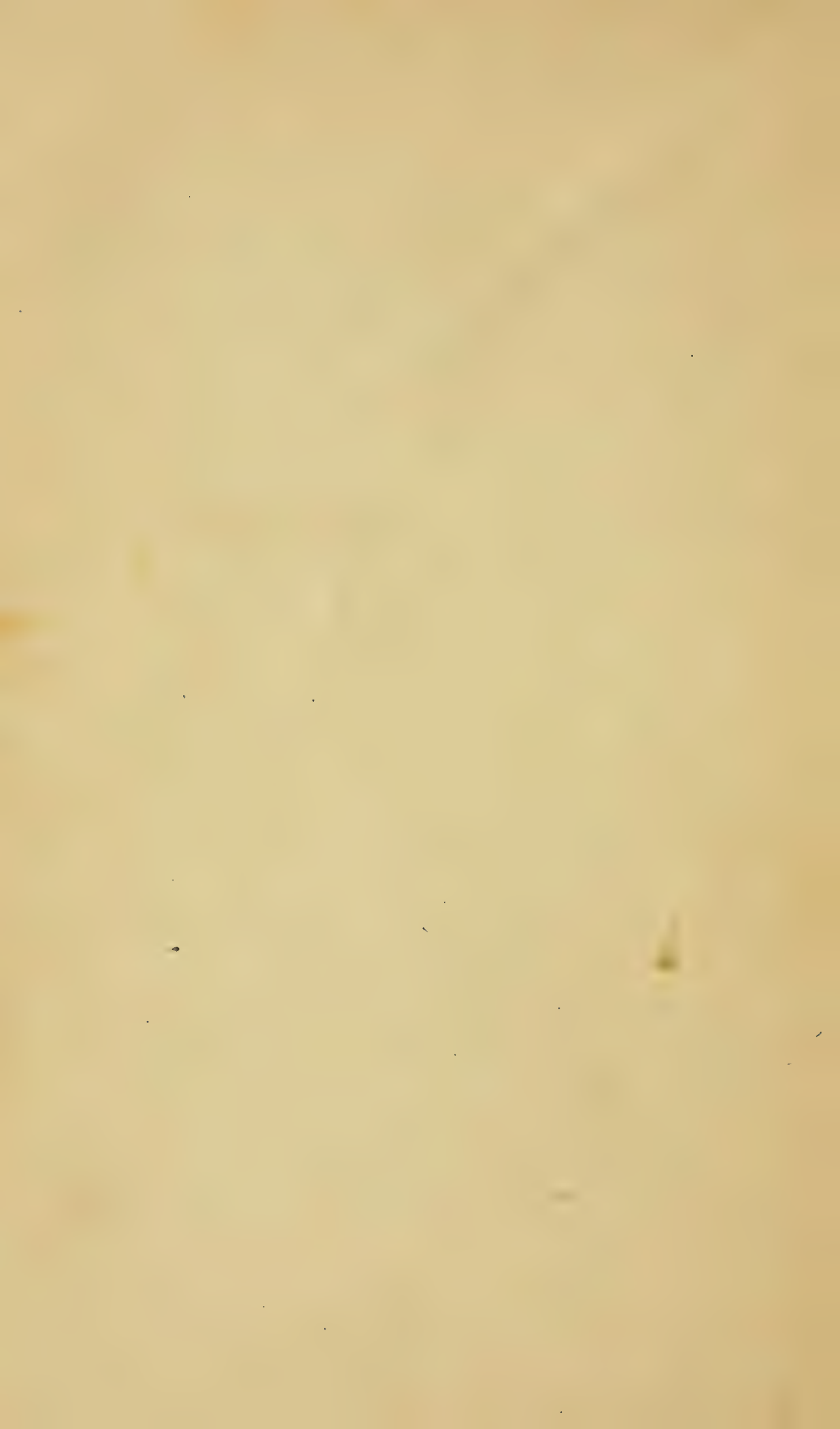
"They want to set you free, you know."

"Wants to make a free nigger out'n Dick Anderson Styode! Yah! yah! yah!* I speck Dick'll be dar when

* It is a singular fact that the slaves always had a great contempt for a "free-nigger;" and the word with them was a synonym for all that was ridiculous and contemptible in a human being's character.



Mummy at Home.



dey goes to make de 'rangements. Dat 'minds me dar is one o' them fokes pirootin' roun' de country now, but I notice he ain't buyin' none o' Mr. Deaderick's niggers an freein' 'em in a hurry."

"Who is 'pirootin' through the country, Dick?" asked the young master, with awakened interest.

"Why, sir, it's one o' dem Aberlitioners who——."

"Hold your jaw, Dick!" exclaimed the old woman shaking her red turban at her irrepressible offspring, "dat fly-trap o' your'n is always a gabblin' more'n dat cymlin head o' your'n knows, an bymeby you'll be called a lyin' nigger. It's dis way, young marster: Dick has bin pirootin aroun' a heap hisself, an' he heeard—now mind, he *heeard*—dat one o' dem Aberlitioners is perusin' throo de country tryin' to 'suade niggers to fite agin our own white fokes. Why can't you talk straight like dat, nigger?" added the ole woman, with a reproachful glance at her son, "an' not resk de good 'pinion de young marster has got o' you?"

"Dat's de way I was gwine to talk," replied Dick, slightly abashed, "but I speck you likes to tell de news yourself, mammy. Yah! yah! yah!"

Mammy and her husband, Uncle George, were the patriarchs of the plantation. Thirty years before the period of which we speak, they had been married in Col. Stewart's back parlor, in Virginia, and had partaken of the wedding supper in the large basement-dining-room. Four years later Mammy was given charge, as nurse, of the infant Stewart, who now has become her owner, and who, during the days of childhood knew no difference between "black mammy" and his own mother, except that the former humored every whim, whether reasonable or otherwise, while the latter was occasionally not forgetful of Solomon's wise injunction, or suggestion, respecting

the training of youth. The two had been the first of the slaves to volunteer to emigrate with the young master to the far-off land of Alabama; and in making themselves known to the stranger slaves in the new land, they never failed to assure them that "ole marster was a gran' gentleman, an' ole miss de grandest lady dat ever walked. But for all dat," mammy would add, with a chuckle, when in a communicative mood, "ole miss can't say dat she never did cross a nigger's back wid a stripe." And then she would tell, with great glee, how "once when young marster was seben years old dat blessed 'leventh day of December, der come a early freeze 'bout half a 'ninch thick; an' ole miss tole him not to go a nigh de fish pon'; an' I stole his skeeters out, an' he run down to have a skeet, an' presently one o' de men fokes fetched 'im back in his arms, drippin wid water, an' a laffin' an' kickin'. Ole miss was in de hall talkin' to me bout fixin for Christmus, an' she was dat skeered she clean lost her head, an' snatched ole marster's ridin' whip off'n de hat-rack an' giv him one good lick befo' I could fling my arms roun' 'im; an' when I did she kept on an' giv us bofe two more good keen licks, an' den all at once she busted out cryin' an' laffin' an' said she was glad of it, an' it served me right for spilin' dat bad boy. But for all dat," the old woman would add, with an impressive nod of her red turban, "when Christmus come 'round, I got a red *silk* handkercher an' a big thick shawl—all wool—'sides what de balance o' de house gang got, an' I knowed what dem was for."

Henry and Dick were mammy's only children. The former had married the belle of the Deaderick plantation, and on the succeeding Christmas had been shot in a drunken broil on that place, the lax management of which,

caring only for a full amount of work, had made it one of the most disorderly in the country, and caused the negroes to become morose and discontented. Henry's wound had bruised without breaking a bone, and hence the difficulty of effecting a cure. Dick wore the “coat of many colors” in mammy's family, and was, with his mouth stretched, as mammy used to say, “like a crapper's lease, from year to year”—as rolicking a young buck as could be found in the country around.

Marienne was much amused at Mr. Stewart's account of the eccentric lady who desired to send her the diamond ring; but when Fox thought, for the first time, of the little bundle from her hands, which he had thoughtlessly dropped into his pocket, and produced it, and all had examined its contents, they came to the conclusion that the poor lady was slightly “off” in her mental faculties. They found a porte-monnaie, around which was wrapped a lace handkerchief of most costly fabric, with the letters B. C. D. E. embroidered in the small centre-piece, which only was of closely-woven texture. In the purse was something over one hundred dollars in notes, chiefly on Northern banks; and the identical diamond of which Mr. Stewart had refused to be the bearer, and which now gleamed like an evil eye, under a professional card, also in the purse, which read as follows:

“_____ M. D.

“No _____ corner _____ and _____ streets, Up Stairs.

“Will not attend ladies at hotel or residence during office hours.”

“The streets mentioned,” said Mr. Stewart, regarding the card attentively, “are in Philadelphia, but may it not be that the lady is a wealthy friend of your father's, who lives in New Orleans, and has been to Philadelphia to consult some specialist?”

"Impossible, Monsieur," replied Marienne, sadly. "My father's acquaintances were all French, and he had no friends."

"Have you an idea of the value of that gem?" asked Mr. Stewart, replacing it in Marienne's hand.

"No, I have not; but I know it must be immensely valuable; one does not see diamonds as large as philiberts often."

"Monsieur," interrupted Fox, "excuse me, but I have an engagement for this evening, and in order to fill it I have to ride eighteen miles. I shall return to breakfast in the morning, and wish to ride Selim."

"All right. What's up?"

"I'm employed in the secret service, and have to keep the secrets," laughed Fox, as he went to prepare for his trip to meet his acquaintance of the morning.

Mr. Stewart, at Marienne's request, immediately addressed a letter to the medical gentleman, whose name was on the card, giving a full description of the lady who was so generous with her valuables, and also giving the initials found on the handkerchief, and requesting to be furnished with the name and address of the lady, if recognized from the description.

A few days later he received a reply, stating that a former patient from Boston, Miss Deborah Elkins, corresponded somewhat with the description, and was both wealthy and charitably inclined. Marienne, as the lady had two of the initials found on the handkerchief, immediately addressed her a letter, the contents of which, in part, may be guessed at from the tenor of the reply, as follows:

"Miss Marienne D'Elfons (colored),

"Care of C. A. Stewart (slaveholder).

"Yours of — inst. is just to hand and contents noted. Would say, in reply, I have traveled in that benighted land often; but it is

a matter of no practical importance if I am or am not the individual who ‘practiced a charitable intended fraud’ on your brother. The property is yours, and if you had known that high order of Christianity, which we possess here, you would be able to recognize the hand of God in the matter. In His wisdom He has intervened to rescue you, by a special providence, from the accursed shackles of slavery, and perhaps from other unwilling degradation. Use the means He has given as He intended; purchase your freedom from the vile creature who traffics in God’s precious souls, and then come directly to me for additional advice.

“Yours, respectfully,

“DEBORAH ELKINS,

“*Sec. Emanuel A. S.*”

“P. S. Nothing herein is intended to wound you. Of course, we could not expect the slave to be greatly superior to the surrounding civilization. D. E.”

“Ah! Monsieur,” said Marienne, handing the letter to Mr. Stewart, as he came in from a ride over the fields, “I have found the eccentric lady.”

Mr. Stewart read the letter carefully, and then asked, with an amused smile:

“Why do you think this woman to be the person we are in search of?”

“Oh,” said Marienne, laughing, “I am sure there couldn’t be two such crazy people loose at the same time in this civilized land.”

“There are thousands such as this one loose all the time in New England. Indeed, all the free-love ‘grass’ widows, and all the old maids, male and female, are of that kind. But do you see nothing in this letter inconsistent with what I have told you of my eccentric acquaintance?”

“The writer of this would not be considered a person of refinement, if judged by the standard here,” replied Marienne, as her eyes fell to the floor.

“No; and my acquaintance, whether crazy or other-

wise, is a lady, and as different from the person who wrote this letter as the gem you have is from the gaudy glass jewels that some of the negro girls wore to the fish-fry, last week. But this ends the matter. You can do no more; and my advice to you is, practically, the same as that woman's—consider the property your own, and credit good-luck by part payment on account current."

"How about using it to purchase my freedom, as advised?" inquired Marienne, laughing.

"Oh, I forgot! but it is a wonder she had not used the expression, 'to strike the shackles from your limbs.' But here goes," laughed the young man, using his riding whip as a magician's wand, "'Presto! Kabal-gavaelu! Be gone!' See! it is done. The shackles fall away, resolved into their original elements of oxygen and iron, and the diamond is mine."

"Not so fast, Monsieur;" said Marienne, with an amused laugh, "it takes two to make a bargain, I have heard; and I did not realize how very beautiful the gem is until now that I feel it to be my very own. Unsay your mystic words—your Kabel-gavaelu—for I shall resume the shackles; the oxygen must depart and the iron must reintegrate itself. I have no idea of letting even you get the best of me in a trade."

Although Marienne fully believed that Mr. Stewart's justly generous allowance of funds was ample to procure, and did procure, for her all that she desired, in the way of wearing apparel; yet, but few days elapsed after the above interview, before she made it convenient to go to Huntsville by rail, and invest most of the cash part of her singular present, in those elegant nothings, in the way of costly laces, that are so delighting to a woman of refined fancy.

CHAPTER VI.

SEEKING LOVE AND FINDING ONLY POLITICS.

*"Thou art free
To leave the post which weary years
Have seen thee guarding faithfully."*

—REV. EDWARD S. GREGORY.

*"If I'm a traitor, think, and blush, thou tyrant,
Whose wrongs betrayed me into treason."—DRYDEN .*

THE great bell at the Atheneum had called the bright groups of laughing maidens from every part of the extensive and well-shaded grounds surrounding that popular institution to resume their studies after the first short recess of the morning ; and Jane, having finished her early tasks, was idly hanging out of one of the front windows, listlessly watching the seemingly busy throngs of men which passed and repassed the streets skirting the four sides of the public square, nearly half a mile away, in the centre of which stood the handsome and substantial Court House of the county, surrounded by ornamental trees set in a green sward. The distance was so great that she could not make out what was going on to attract so large a crowd from the country around into the usually quiet little village. Presently, however, the sound of a fife and drum caused her to surmise that another military company was being formed in addition to the one which had already been organized in that vicinity, and which subsequently constituted a part, and helped to achieve the glory of the Fourth Alabama Regiment.

She watched the bustling, restless crowd, until the five minutes, which she had intended to sacrifice to idleness, grew into an hour or more, when she suddenly withdrew from the window with the exclamation :

“ Bless goodness if dar ain’t Mars’ Chyarles Styode ; an’ he’s a comin’ in at de gate, too ! ”

“ Jane ! ” called Dr. Hansel from the hall, where he had been promenading, and also observing what was going on up town ; “ Come here, quickly. ”

“ I wonder what dat ole watsisname got for me to do now ! ” grumbled Jane, as she reluctantly obeyed the order.

“ Go up town and tell Mr. Mason to—— ” began the old gentleman, but Jane interrupted with :

“ Young miss gives me my orders, sir, an’ she ain’t told me to go up—— ”

“ Silence ! ” exclaimed the old gentleman, angrily, and firmly ; “ Tell Mr. Mason to send me a—— ”

“ I was hired, ” again interrupted Jane, beginning to count on her fingers, “ to tend de do’ ; fix up de parlors ; wait on—— ”

“ Blood and fury ! ” almost shouted the old gentleman, with a threatening movement in the direction of a chair, which stood near by ; “ Leave my presence, this instant, and tell Mr. Mason to send me a box of paper collars No. thirteen. ”

Jane started immediately, in obedience to the command, but could not resist the temptation to fire off her usual “ tee-hee, ” this time in derision. She feared that she made it little too pointed, however, when the old gentleman commanded “ Stop there, ” but felt relieved as he added, “ I see Mr. Stewart coming—nice gentleman—particular friend. Don’t stop, but tell him to walk up to the west parlor. Do you hear ? the *west* parlor ; he knows the

way ; and you go right on : needn't mind about getting back before time for dinner."

Before Mr. Stewart had time to ring, Jane met him with her usual warm greeting.

"Ah ! Jane, my good girl," said Mr. Stewart, shaking hands with her ; " still guarding the portals of knowledge, I see ! Are the family all well and at home to-day ? "

"Oh, yes, sir," replied the girl, courtesying modestly ; " dey's all pritty pyeart 'cept ole marster. I's feard he's *mighty* ailin'. But he says for you to walk up in de wes' parlor."

Dr. Hansel received his guest with stately, yet, to all appearances, cordial politeness ; but when the latter stated that his call was intended, in part, for the ladies, the old gentleman ignored the remark, and enquired :

"What news do you bring us from the North and East, Mr. Stewart ? "

"Only that with which the papers are filled, sir," replied the young man, glancing out through the window. "Everything seems to be in hubbub and confusion. Our brothers of the East, I fear, are very angry and very eager for war, particularly in Massachusetts. I have seen nothing to allay the fear that we are on the eve of a bloody struggle."

"Yes, it seems that we are ; but it looks as if the fact were not fully realized by the masses as yet."

"It is not in New England, I'm sure. It is quite amusing—or rather it would be if it were not a most solemn matter—to hear some of the leading men and papers of that section speak so flippantly of "crushing the rebellion," and having a "hanging bee," as they term it, on the Fourth of July. They think one lively, little battle, will put our troops to flight, and that they will then have

nothing to do but to pursue and hang. The estimate that not more than seventy-five thousand troops and less than one hundred millions of money will be required for the work of subjugating the South, has misled the masses, both North and South ; the former as to the great magnitude of the undertaking, and the latter as to the probable force and means that are to be resisted."

"What force and means do *you* think will be necessary for the subjugation of the South?"

"You speak as if our subjugation were a foregone conclusion, sir," laughed the young man, "and I admit that it is not an impossibility. The United States government has the ships to blockade our coast lines, and the money to hire men from every portion of the globe. It would be folly to deny the ability of her means and materials to overpower us ultimately ; but before it is done, if ever, she will have to put into the field millions of troops, and expend thousands of millions of money."

"Oh, I guess the present estimates are not so far wrong," said the old man, with an incredulous smile. "Why, according to your calculations, it would be far cheaper to buy the negroes."

"It would, indeed, sir ; but the old abolitionists, who are now really the controlling spirits in the government, had rather spend those countless millions for war on us, which, of course, they will wage by proxy so far as the actual fighting is concerned, than to pay a tithe of them for the peaceful abolition of slavery."

"You are severe on the abolition party, sir," said the old man, as a slight flush stole into his face. "May I ask you to state the premises on which you found so damaging an assertion?"

"I judge them, as we usually judge other people, by

their words and acts. In the first place, in or under the old United States government, the word ‘abolition,’ as applied to a political party, meant the same as ‘lawless.’ The ‘Abolition Party’ meant, really, the ‘Lawless Party.’”

“How will you make that appear, sir?”

“It should be self-evident, doctor, to one who understands the theory and history of the old government. Our colonies, which were first leagued together under Articles of Confederation, when they deemed it desirable to form a more perfect Union, appointed a convention to form the compact or agreement known as the Constitution. This Constitution, as you well know, was a compromise between greatly conflicting sentiments and interests. One by one the states, which were beyond a doubt then sovereign, seceded from the old Confederation and joined the new Union, by voting to adopt the new Constitution; some of them, notably New York, Virginia and New Jersey, intimating or directly declaring their right to secede again, if such action should ever seem to be demanded by the best interests of their people. Massachusetts has threatened more than once to secede, you know, and several other New England states pretended to think seriously of it; but, as there was no objection raised, they took counsel of thrift, and did not break the heart of the Union. The Constitution adopted delegated no authority to the general government to meddle with the internal affairs of the states in any manner or for any purpose. It follows, then, that the abolitionists at the North who clamored for the abolition of slavery in the South, and flooded Congress with petitions looking to that end, proposed to act without the sanction of law, and were therefore a lawless party.”

“I think the original intention of the Abolition party was only to educate the public mind up to the point of accomplishing abolition by the voluntary acts of the states.”

“Then they should have directed their efforts toward those only who could act, according to law, in the matter, instead of teaching their own people to hate and abuse us, and to declare the Constitution a vile instrument; and they should not have sent emissaries into the South for the purpose of inflaming the minds of the negroes, and inciting them to riot and bloodshed.”

“But you said, a moment since, that these terrible abolitionists would prefer to pay blood-money rather than pay a trifle for peaceful abolition.”

“They themselves have said so. One of their literary men, a ‘writer of books,’ says, in reply to a suggestion for the Government to pay for the South’s property in slaves :

“‘The suggestion is criminal! the demand unjust, wicked, monstrous, damnable! Shall we pet the blood-hounds for the purpose of doing them a favor? Shall we feed the curs of slavery to make them fat at our expense? Pay these whelps for the purpose of converting them into decent, honest men! It is our honest conviction that they deserve to be at once reduced to a parallel with the basest criminals that lie fettered within the cells of our public prisons.’ ”*

“That was the utterance of but one individual,” said the old man, again coloring slightly.

“But it voiced the sentiments of the great mass of the

* This book was “The Impending Crisis,” by one Helper, politician and philanthropist. Over 100,000 copies were sold in New England within a few months.

people, including some Democrats who belong to the party, or claim to do so, for the sake of the loaves and fishes of office. As a proof of this assertion, it has the written indorsement of Greeley, Phillips, Garrison, Stevens, the two Shermans, Chandler, Seward, Conkling, Conger, Hoar, and so on down to the merest ward politician; besides innumerable State officers, and *sixty-eight Northern members of Congress.*”

The old gentleman could not reply to this damaging charge, as he knew it to be fully true. He seemed for a time lost in thought, but finally spoke as if musing to himself:

“The Southern people are pretty hot and fiery, too; they hanged John Brown.”

“That is true,” replied the young man, smiling at his companion’s abstractedness; but we grow hot and fiery only when we see lawful rights and privileges assailed, or outrage committed; while they evince those characteristics from a desire to deprive of rights and privileges and commit outrage. As to John Brown, had we not hanged that vulgar outlaw, we should have felt ashamed to hold up our heads in the world, and claim to possess the highest order of civilization.

“I imagine, Mr. Stewart,” said the old gentleman, meditatively, “that you will go into this war with your whole heart and soul.”

“On the contrary, sir,” replied the young man, “I shall be actuated only by a sense of duty to my country. We shall have no opportunity to fight those who have made the trouble. They are the little fice dog which you have often seen, no doubt, get up a fight between two noble animals, and then sneak off to a place of safety. The miserable little creature, the abolition party, which

has been yelping at the heels of the South for more than two generations, has at last succeeded in getting up a fight between the usually good-natured mastiff, the North, and the plucky little spitz, the South, and will now sneak into government contracts, and other paying home employments, and howl piteously when the spitz shall worry the mastiff, or yelp with furious delight if the ponderous jaws of the mastiff shall crush the slender bones of his adversary. In the latter event he will come out from his hiding place, after the spitz is entirely dead, to mutilate and feed upon his carcass."

"Upon my word," exclaimed the old man, laughing, and again coloring, "you are a vigorous hater! But what becomes of your allegiance to the mother, or rather the master government?"

"I am no hater, doctor," replied the young man, earnestly. "I *hate* no living thing upon the earth, but I feel a vigorous contempt for canting hypocrisy and cowardice. I could even feel a degree of respect for the little fice alluded to, if it had the courage to use its teeth otherwise than as a scavenger. As to my allegiance, it belongs to my state, and through her, only, to any superior government. As I would defend my mother against the dagger of an assassin, even if it could be wielded by my own father, so will I defend my state, or any just cause at her command, it matters not who the assailant may be."

"Would it not be better for your people to sacrifice some of their rights under the Constitution than to be forced to sacrifice all, and your property, too, as will be the case if you make a stubborn resistance?"

"That remains to be proven. But our people do not make such thrifty calculations. We will surrender all,

after having been overcome in an earnest and manly defence, more cheerfully than we could make the most trivial surrender which would leave the stain of moral cowardice.”

“It is the founding of action upon such sentiments, I presume, that makes what your people call ‘chivalry.’”

The slight sneer with which the old gentleman accompanied this remark was lost on his guest, for the great bell having sounded the noon hour, troops of laughing, romping girls frisked through the halls, out into the open air, where they congregated in groups under the shade of the spreading oaks, or formed lounging squads in the vine-covered arbors. In one of these sat Miss Florence Seymour, looking refreshingly lovely in a pale blue lawn, with a single white moss-rose bud, her favorite flower, in the fastening of her dainty lace collar; all unconscious, perhaps, that her gallant knight had sustained a wearisome conversation for one mortal hour, with the hope of being finally rewarded by a glance into her beautiful violet eyes. Was it accident or design that had caused her to select Mr. Stewart’s two little cousins—the Misses Anderson—as her companions, and to choose the arbor nearest the walk that lead to the front gate, as her resting place? Mr. Stewart, as he gazed through the window, hoped it was the latter, and the thought caused a flush to steal to his cheeks which Dr. Hansel attributed to the remark he had just made that “the ‘chivalry’ will be brought to their knees, quick enough, when they find a hundred thousand troops with bayonets at their throats.” But the old gentleman was astonished, and opened his eyes in wonder as the young man replied, absently :

“I fully agree with you, doctor; bring ’em to their knees;—only think—hundred thousand, with rose buds

at their throats ! Oh—ah—I beg pardon ! I fear I did not fully understand—that is, I meant to say *bayonets* ! But,” he added, collecting himself, as he arose and offered his hand, “I fear I have trespassed too long on your courtesy, sir. I shall give myself the pleasure of calling again soon to pay my respects especially to the ladies. I had the pleasure of meeting Frank Conrad, as I passed through New York, and he made me the bearer of messages to his cousin, Miss Seymour. As they must be delivered in person, I shall keep them for my next call.”

Notwithstanding this intimation from the young gentleman that he desired to repeat his visit, Dr. Hansel did not invite him to do so ; and he felt, as he shook the old man’s hand, that he had grown even less cordial than before, and that there was nothing to hope from his good offices, but all to fear from the stumbling blocks which it might be in his power to place in the pathway leading from the present to the enchanted castle standing out so bright and beautiful against the roseate background of the future.

Descending the broad steps of the front portico, with a quick, nervous step, Mr. Stewart walked directly to the arbor in which he had seen the queen of the hundred thousand curiously equipped troops of his fancy, and making a playful allusion to Calypso’s grotto, asked to be permitted to enter. But his entry was not made with his usual gracefulness, for his two little cousins, seizing him unceremoniously and hustling him about, in the usual school-girl fashion, called him a dear, handsome, mean, vagrant, old Ulysses, and finally dragging him in, ordered him to kneel and kiss the hand of the goddess of the grotto.

Miss Seymour, blushing, but laughing merrily at the frolicsome welcome of the little misses, extended her hand in greeting, and the flush on her cheeks deepened to crimson as she felt the tender, lingering pressure of the young man’s hand. But he was a man of too much tact to linger long in such company; so informing his little cousins that there was to be a grand pic-nic on Beaver Lake during the ensuing week, and that he had been appointed envoy extraordinary, to say that they should not be invited unless they promised faithfully to procure, secure and guarantee the attendance of Miss Seymour; and having heard a positive promise to attend exacted from that young lady, he waved a playful adieu to the party; not, however, until he had stooped to pick up the rose-bud which had fallen—accidentally (?)—from the young lady’s throat, and had quickly but carefully placed its stem in the watch-pocket of his vest.”

“Oh, I say, cousin Charles,” called the elder of the little cousins, “I forgot to ask if Lieutenant Flournoy will be there; because, if he is——”

“Of course, *Lieutenant* Flournoy will be there,” laughed the young man, mimicking the stress laid upon the title, “It will be no pic-nic at all if the *lieutenant* isn’t there; eh, Clare?”

“Well, then, you needn’t expect me! He is too great a tease for *anybody* to have to put up with,” called the young lady, making a face at her cousin, and running back into the arbor. “Only think, Miss Florence, John Flournoy is to be there. He was a bad enough tease before, and I know there will be no putting up with him at all, now that he has got to be a grand lieutenant in the army.”

CHAPTER VII.

COUNTER CONSPIRACY.

*"Mad as Christians used to be
About the thirteenth century,
There's lots of Christians to be had
In this, the nineteenth, just as mad!"*

—MOORE'S TWOPENNY POST BAG.

*"Fie on't! Oh fie! tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it."—SHAKSPEARE'S HAMLET.*

"MONSIEUR," said Fox, as Mr. Stewart sat on the front piazza enjoying the afternoon breeze, after his return from Barrensville, and dreamily puffing the smoke from a long, cane-root stemmed, clay pipe, which, being made of Virginia's red clay, he patriotically claimed was superior to the famous meerschaum from Natolia, "Do you know, or did you ever hear, of a man by the name of Wheeless,—one Charles L. Wheeless?"

"Wheeless; Charles L.?" queried the young man, languidly, as he took the pipe stem from his mouth and blew a cloud of smoke up toward the ceiling; "no, I think not."

"Mr. Howard told me, yesterday, that you knew his history and antecedents. He is the fellow who 'stole the livery of heaven to serve the devil in,' so to speak. He published for a time, in North Alabama, a Know-Nothing paper called the *Tuscumbia Democrat*."

"Oh, yes; I recollect him," said Mr. Stewart, with some animation. "He was a Know-Nothing, but claimed

to be a red-hot fire-eater, till the *Barrensville Herald* proved him to be the blackest kind of a black Republican Abolitionist. The two papers got to pitching butcher knives of logic and politics at each other, and the *Herald* man, suspecting the sincerity of Wheeless' devotion to the honor and interests of the South, wrote to Eastman, of the *Nashville Union and American*, who is a New Hampshire man—as Wheeless claimed to be—to inquire about the fellow. Eastman referred the *Herald* man to Butterfield, of Concord, editor of the *New Hampshire Patriot*, and Butterfield gave the information that Wheeless was not only a fanatical Abolitionist, and hater of the South, but was a thoroughly dishonest person, and as vile a scamp as ever took leave of Concord ‘between two days,’ as Butterfield expressed it.* There was also information of such a nature as caused Wheeless, when it came to his knowledge, to fear a term in prison, and he left Alabama as he had left Concord, ‘between two days.’ During the next year he sent incendiary pamphlets, written by himself, to be distributed here; but he soon quieted down, and has not been heard from since the first year of our residence here.”

“Do you think so?” queried Fox, with a knowing smile. “But,” he added, “I want to ask if you ever heard of one William A. Purst?”†

“Why,” answered Mr. Steward, with a laugh, after a full puff from his pipe, “you must be in humor for enquiring after scurvy fellows.”

“Then, as you know of him also,” said Fox, impressively, “if you knew that those two fellows were here in

* Real names are given here, and all these facts, connected with Wheeless' history in Alabama, can be verified there by old citizens. *Wheeless is misspelt* for obvious reasons.

† The name *Purst* is purposely misspelt.

Alabama, doing the devil's own work, would you object to joining our Spirits of the Lost Clan of Cocletz in a raid on them and their dupes?"

"Dupes! What dupes could they possibly have in Alabama?"

"The discontented and vicious among the negro population."

"And how could they do 'the devil's own work' on them?"

"Might they not incite those of the class of which I speak who may, in all probability, be found, here and there, to do the devil's work with the torch and butcher knife, after the white men of the country have gone to the front?"

"No; there are too few of that class; none, I may say, so vicious as that. I am willing to see the country left in the hands of the negroes, with the old men to advise and direct, and do not fear the influence of any foreign element. Indeed, if we do not make up our minds to leave it so, we had as well surrender at once, for we shall need every able-bodied man in the field."

"And you think there is no danger of riots?"

"No; the abolition papers are trying to frighten us with threats of what the negroes will do, but, as usual, they only prove their ignorance of any correct knowledge of the relations existing between master and slave. The negro is not a Puritan in his instincts, nor is he a white-washed savage of any kind. Whatever he may have been in his own land, he has here, as a slave, imbibed *our* civilization, *our* Christianity and *our* ideas of Christian obligations and duties. He might, in time, be made to forget or ignore the teachings of this high civilization and pure Christianity, it is true, if he were cut loose from our

influence and mastery, but even in his natural state, in his own country, he did not perpetrate the hideous crimes which New England Puritanism seems to be hopefully expecting of him here; and our war will show to the disciples of John Brown a sublime spectacle—a gallant people fighting to free themselves from danger of being brought under the most despotic of all despotisms—a government whose ‘higher law,’ above all other laws, is the unbridled will of a majority, while four millions of ‘lashed and bleeding slaves’ labor faithfully and earnestly to feed and clothe the army, and provide comfortably for ‘mistis an’ de babies,’ whose chief protectors they will be.”

“Yes,” said Fox, somewhat gloomily. “That will be the case if the negroes are left to be governed by their own feelings and instincts. But they are a very credulous people, and can be made, most of them, to believe any absurdity that may be plausibly presented by shrewd and designing persons. Suppose I should tell you that already a few here and there, in this and adjoining counties, and perhaps in other parts of the state, have been made to believe that the United States Government is about to wage a war to conquer this country, and turn it over to themselves, while we will fight to prevent this, and to secure the right of sending them to work in the mines and coal-pits of the North, ‘where the snow is three feet deep in August,’ as they are told.”

“That would be absurd,” laughed Mr. Stewart. “The negro has a dread of Jack Frost, but he is not so great a fool as he is often pictured to be for the fun of a joke, and, besides, his love and confidence are not so lightly given, nor so causelessly withdrawn, as is often the case with his white brother. But still he is ignorant, and we should protect him from imposition.”

"I am glad to hear you admit even that much," said Fox, with a shade of sarcasm in his voice. "You are in an unusually amiable mood, are you not?"

"Perhaps so; at any rate, I feel as if, for the sake of one gentle Puritan I know of, I could 'pray for those who despitefully use us.' Does that indicate an unusually amiable mood?" asked the young man, with a smile. "But," he added, "what about Wheelless and the other fellow?"

"To be brief, sir," replied Fox, with a business-like look settling on his face, "the two men in question are in this country traveling about on the 'underground railroad' plan, one representing himself as a patent agent from Kentucky, and the other as the agent of a publishing house in Louisville. But their real object and design, in coming here, is to organize the negroes, so that there shall be concert of action between them, and they shall be prepared to strike one terrible blow at the supremacy of the white people, at a time when, if the plan could be carried out, a blow of the nature intended would disband the most gallant army that ever took the field."

"What do you mean?"

"I must answer by giving you a history of the whole affair. On the morning of your arrival I was approached, at the station, by Purst, who had been led, by no less a person than Fred Deaderick, to believe that I am a person who would make him a capital and willing tool. What Mr. Deaderick's object was, is a matter for further investigation, for I must do him the justice to say that all my endeavors failed to connect him with these villainous plots, any further than a mere knowledge of their existence may connect him. Perhaps he wished to get me in his power, so that he might get revenge for the unwilling

baptizing, which he received at the hands of the Spirits of the Lost Clan, for his ill-treatment of Henry's brother-in-law. Be that as it may, I took a seat in the trap set for me, and on that very night I attended a meeting of the conspirators, who call themselves the ‘Red String Gang.’”

“Well, whom did you find there; and what did you learn that is of consequence?”

“The only negro there, who has force of character enough to give his joining the order any significance, is the ring-leader—under the white men—Peter Dillard who——.”

“Peter Dillard!” exclaimed the young man, with some astonishment, “I would not have supposed it possible!”

“Nor would I, but he was there, and a leader! And I learnt there, and at subsequent meetings, that there are certain Abolition societies, conducted secretly, in all the large cities and towns in New England, and in some of the large cities in other sections—notably Cincinnati, where the manufacturer of all the light buggies we buy here is the president of the society—which act in concert, and have sent paid emissaries into the South, who are expected to organize the negroes, and hold them well in hand, until the two armies to be raised, North and South, shall be about to join in a great battle, which they think will occur in Virginia, near Richmond. Then the signal is to be passed along the lines of railroad, and the whole South is to be swept with a hurricane of fire and bloodshed.”

“Jupiter Ultor!” exclaimed the young master, with a laugh. “What a ‘tempest in a tea-pot’ they are preparing for us!” but seeing a shade of disappointment and annoyance pass over his companion's face, he added:

“Do you really believe, Fox, that, even amongst the cranky Puritans, enough crazy fanatics could be found to form a society so extensive as you intimate, who would be so lost to every sense of moral obligation, to say nothing of the common instincts of humanity, as to be willing to instigate so revolting a crime against millions of helpless women and children?”

“My dear sir,” replied Fox, earnestly, “there is no accounting for the extremes to which fanaticism will carry its votaries, particularly when they have arrived at that point of madness which leads them to believe that the end sought to be achieved will justify any means. That there have been, for many years, such secret societies as I speak of, you cannot deny; and that they are now preparing for this fiendish work, I do not see what better evidence we could desire than the statements of their emissaries, who are now here, trying to organize and prepare the negroes for that work.”

“Has it not occurred to you that these fellows are merely independent candidates for the lash or the gallows, who, with the usual bravado of their class, lay claim to a strong backing which really exists only in their distempered imaginations?”

“No, really; that has not occurred to me,” said Fox, showing more vexation in his countenance than he was conscious of ever having felt toward the young master; “but it now occurs to me to congratulate you on being in a remarkably amiable mood.”

“Well, yes;” replied Mr. Stewart, smiling at his companion’s evident annoyance, “I do not, I confess, feel very savage even toward our hereditary enemies this afternoon. I know a great many Northern people, have traveled there a good deal, and never, to my knowledge, have

I met an avowed straight-out Abolition fanatic. New England is very prolific of fanatical demagogues, on every question of public interest, and there is not an extremist in America, North or South, even including the so-called ‘fire-eaters’ in our section, in whose blood, if you carefully trace back his ancestry, you will not find the taint of the Puritan virus. Yet, even in New England, the masses are about such people as we have here, with failings and virtues about evenly divided.”

“Yes, the great mass of them, no doubt, have their virtues as well as their failings; and I might, possibly, doubt the full truth of what these emissaries state, did I not know the history of Nat. Turner’s insurrection, and of John Brown’s more recent raid into Virginia. The scheme now in contemplation is substantially the same as was Brown’s, only it is more diabolical and more cowardly. More diabolical because the attack is to be made only on women and children and a few old men, and more cowardly for the same reason, and because those who are the active organizers of the plot do not purpose to carry the torch and butcher knife in their own hands. Brown’s attempt had the barbaric merit of being backed, so far as he himself was concerned, by a certain kind of brute courage; and he claimed, as these men do, to have had a strong backing at the North. The people of Virginia, and of the South generally, disbelieved *his* assertions in that particular; but when he was hanged under the laws of Virginia the entire truthfulness of all he said was made painfully evident. Did not the State Senate of Massachusetts entertain a motion to adjourn ‘out of respect for the sacredness of the day’ of his execution, and did not the political party in power in that body come within *three votes* of putting that powerful commonwealth

on record as a warm sympathizer with, if not an aider of, that most damnable and revolting plot? Did not a large majority, if not all the towns in New England, cause their church bells to be tolled, and did not congregations assemble to 'consecrate the day' on which the murderer was hanged? And have not a great many of the leading clergymen of New England, down to the present day, been glorifying him as a saint and martyr who 'died in doing God's holy work,' and whose example on earth, like that of the blessed Saviour, is worthy of all imitation, as affording a new means of grace which will give a sure hope of glory here and hereafter? And has not the press, as well as the pulpit of that land, to say nothing of political orators, been since holding up the 'patriotic, righteous and heroic' deeds of that arch villain for the admiration and emulation of all 'worthy American citizens?' Tell me if all this be true, and if it be at all unlikely, in view of these facts, that enough fanatical old women and emasculated men could be found in that land of active tongues and torpid livers—that land which once persecuted harmless and pious Quakers, and denounced them as 'locusts from the pit of hell'—who would be willing to 'serve God and their country' at a safe distance, by furnishing money to hire men to plan and superintend 'the blessed work' of slaughter and incendiarism?"

"Ah! Fox," replied Mr. Stewart, very gravely, "you are an artful fellow, and know where to reach in order to touch the hidden chords of that passion, which is my one besetting sin. But you should place to the credit of Massachusetts, the fact, that of late years, only the worst men there, as a rule, have come to the front in politics; and, to the credit of the New England towns, the fact that only one knave and fool is enough to ring a bell, and

if another should propose to ‘preach a sermon’ on a novel and exciting topic, a crowd might easily be assembled through motives of mere curiosity. As to the clergymen generally, who have never tired of glorifying Brown and abusing us, it is to be expected, when alleged disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus of Nazareth, who have set themselves up to teach in public places, shall ignore His example on earth, and attempt to improve on His teachings, their teaching will be such as the Evil One has taught through his disciples from the beginning of time. But I agree that these conspirators must be attended to, it matters not whether they come as emissaries of Puritan clubs, or as independent candidates for the hangman’s honors. Why not turn them over to the law?”

“Yes, the laws of the State would send them to the penitentiary for what they have already done ; but this is no time to appeal to the law. Our people are thinking more of ‘Hardie’s Tactics,’ and the ‘School of the Soldier,’ than of courts and civil processes. If the case were brought up, I imagine Judge Tyus would order Tom Cox to have the long-roll sounded to call the court together, would appoint Benton Sanders judge advocate, would sit on a drum-head and order the prisoners to be shot to death with musketry as spies ; forgetting that, according to the laws of war, spies should be hanged. But,” added Fox, smiling slightly at his own humorous conceit, “to be serious, I think this case should be so managed as not to arouse apprehensions in the minds of the women and children, who must, before another year shall bring its harvest season, be left practically alone with the negroes as their protectors ; and yet, at the same time, to punish these foreigners to our soil in such a manner as will strike terror to the hearts of their few dupes among the negroes.”

“There is no fear that the women and children can be made to have any very serious apprehension ; but what do you propose ?”

“Let me say, first, that while I fully believe the confidence felt in the loyalty of the negroes, generally, is not misplaced, yet only a very small number will be necessary in each county to ‘start the ball,’ as they express it, and once started, these men think, all will join ‘to swell the mighty cry of freedom.’ This is my plan : I have succeeded in getting them to appoint a meeting for this neighborhood, at the old Cocletz gin-house, and it comes off on Saturday night next. That will be the last meeting which Wheeless is to attend for a long time in North Alabama, as on the next day he leaves for Mobile, and we must see that it shall be the last ever held by those men. The Spirits of the Lost Clan of Cocletz, must swoop down upon them there and then, and bear them off into infinite space, before the eyes of the negroes.”

Fox chuckled for a moment over this scheme, while the young master seemed to be engaged in deep thought. Finally, the latter asked :

“And then—what ?”

“That will be all, so far as they are concerned,” laughed Fox ; “but you recollect the Knights of the Golden Circle !”

“KUKLOS !” exclaimed Mr. Stewart, elevating his eyebrows. “Well ?”

“Exactly !” said Fox. “The designs of our talented captain-general in Kentucky, and his brilliant lieutenant in the land of the Montezumas, are already frustrated by this war. His Excellency, M—— D—— will not or cannot bring his ten thousand troops here to help us, and as to * * * * * and every individual

American who expected to hasten to his battle-call, ‘*satagit rerum suarum.*’ It is not likely, therefore, that the harsh Greek dissyllable which you have just uttered will ever become a battle-cry unless we determine that, in view of the certain failure of the designs of the organization, we have a right to consider ourselves freed from all obligations to it, and shall appropriate to ourselves a part of its machinery and organization, with a view to preserving for ourselves what it was designed, in part, to impose upon others—order, civilization, and a wholesome dread of the consequences of outlawry. A union of the practical in the Golden Circle, with the mysterious in the Lost Clan, will make an excellent and interesting secret organization, which may be made to do the country good service, besides punishing the two miscreants already here.”

“But what is the necessity for secrecy?”

“It gives a charm to all organizations, and gives strength to weakness. See what the Abolitionists, at first a little despised faction, even in their own country, have accomplished by means of their secret societies. But while there is no real *necessity* for secrecy, at present, and in dealing with this case, how would it be, in the course of the war, if the enemy should get possession of North Alabama. The Tennessee river furnishes a broad highway for their gunboats and transports, and we must expect that they will avail themselves of it and forage on us freely and frequently.”

“Have you heard these men speak of other emissaries in the South?”

“They have spoken of several others, but I could not learn where they now are. I have not thought it prudent to appear inquisitive, but I hope to get their carpet-bags, with letters and papers, on Saturday night.”

“What will Howard, the captain of our camp of the Golden Circle, say to your proposition to amalgamate it with the Spirits of the Lost Clan?”

“I went to see Mr. Howard on that subject while you were away, and he is in favor of it; considers that, the order being now virtually dead, we need not consider our obligations to it as binding further than as regards the divulging of names and facts which might possibly work future annoyance to some of the order; indeed, he was so well pleased with the idea, and so fully impressed with the belief that it may be made to do great good, that he set to work immediately to perfect the plan, and said he would notify all the knights in his neighborhood—five, I think—to meet us here this afternoon, and consult and arrange for the raid on Saturday night.”

This conversation was continued for half an hour or longer, when Mr. Stewart discovered the expected party approaching up the east road at half speed, riding two and two, with Messrs. Howard and Flournoy in the lead. As they neared the front gate the latter, placing an imaginary lance in rest, charged at full speed upon the peacock, which, as usual, was perched upon the arched framework of the open gate. As, in imagination, his long lance entered the gaudy plumage of the drowsy bird, he shouted the cabalistic cry, “KUKLOS!” to which the startled and indignant fowl shrieked a discordant echo as he alighted upon the ground fifty feet away.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST KUKLUX OUTRAGE.

*"I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night,
And, for the day, confined to fast in fires."*

—SHAKSPEARE'S HAMLET.

*"Hush, hark! as from the centre of the deep—
Shrieks—fiendish yells!"*—DANA'S BUCCANEER.

ON the following Saturday afternoon it would have puzzled any one who might have been an observer of Fox's movements to imagine what mysterious work he was engaged in. Some time before sunset he left The Oaks, and riding rapidly in the direction of the "Barrens," alighted in a dense forest, with thick undergrowth, just as the shades of twilight had begun to obscure surrounding objects. Inserting his hand into a pair of pockets attached to his saddle, he drew out two strips of the hairy hide of some animal, with strings attached. These he tied over the soles of his boots, and, after seeing that they were well secured, he set out on foot, leading his horse through the forest in a straight line, which he pursued for more than a mile. Then, making a large circuit, he returned in the direction from which he had come about half a mile, when, making a sudden turn to the left, he arrived in a few moments at an old hedge-row of briars and brambles that had grown up along the line of a fence which had now almost entirely disappeared.

This growth offered no serious obstruction to his entrance into a wide field, near the middle of which stood a large dilapidated house, that was evidently an abandoned gin-house; for about forty feet in front of it stood a large screw-press, made from the solid trunk of a giant pine, which, standing fully thirty feet high, with its lever arms extended, looked in the darkness like a colossal sentinel warning away all intruders.

Approaching to within a hundred feet of this weird sentinel, Fox hitched his horse to a bush, and, keeping away from the old buildings, walked several times around them, making a circle whose radius was about one hundred feet. Then, muttering to himself, with a nervous laugh, which changed to a half shudder as he glanced at the shadows which the level rays of the rising moon were causing to hide behind the massive and unhewn pillars of the old house, "Those hounds will think this the largest and most eccentric fox they ever nosed in this or any other country!" he mounted, and glancing furtively over his shoulder at the deepening shadows cast by the old house, pressed the rowels into the flanks of his horse, and rode rapidly away, all unconscious that his movements had been observed by a wide-eyed watcher, whose startled gaze had been fixed on him through the broken lattice of the gable window. Scarcely had the last sound made by the intruder died away in the distance, before the silent watcher protruded its head from the broken window, and, after stretching its neck to ascertain if there was no longer the sight, sound or scent of a human being near, it sprang lightly from the window to the top of the worm-eaten press opposite, and gave a whoop that made the woods resound for miles around—that peculiarly startling whoop of astonishment

which has often curdled the blood of the solitary night-walker in the vicinity of Southern swamps, which, as it has startled him a hundred times before, he instantly recognizes as the tripartite shout of the large swamp owl. In a moment the shout was answered from the depths of the swamp a mile away, and for two hours the unsociable neighbors kept up a solemn confab, occasionally varying the monotony of sound by a chattering rhythmus, the solemn monotone of which, the negroes have a superstition, is the music to which some lost soul, about to take its departure to the shades of Hades, executes a valedictory dance among the drooping branches of the weeping cypress.

Suddenly three sharp raps upon the trunk of a distant tree startled the solemn dialogist, causing him to spring into the air and hurriedly seek the nearer vicinity of his distant neighbor, as four dusky figures cautiously emerged from the darkness of the forest, and made their way across the field to the dilapidated gin-house, which—like all buildings of the kind then to be found in the most productive regions of the cotton belt—stood upon twelve enormous posts or pillars, made from the undressed stump-cuts of the trunks of as many walnut or poplar monarchs of the forest. One side of this was closed by the “lint-room,” which, in the long-gone days of its usefulness, received the cotton, divested of the seed, as it came from the “gin-stand” located on the floor supported by the pillars referred to. The party, passing in under the gin-house, seated themselves upon the heavy levers of the ponderous wooden cog-wheel which formerly drove the ginning machinery, and engaged in an earnest conversation, carried on in a low tone. Soon the sound of three raps again came up from the forest, and was

answered by the party already arrived. Again and again came the sounds, till, in the course of half an hour, more than two dozen men were seated under the shadow of the gin-house.

"Well, boys," said one of the party, stepping out into the moonlight, and revealing the features of a white man, "it seems that we are not to have much of a crowd, and we had as well go to work. Hadn't we better put out pickets?"

"Yes, sir!" "Certainly!" "Of course!" came from half a dozen negro voices. "I didn't want to come to dis place, nohow," added one.

"I don't think it is necessary to put out pickets," said a voice, recognized as Fox's. "We can see in every direction except to the south of us, and there is a swamp on that side. Besides, we are now on the premises of old Cocletz, and I, for one, had rather keep with the crowd. I didn't like the sound of that voice which we said was an owl's."

"An 'twas a owl, too," said the indignant voice of a negro, which assumed a persuasive tone, as it added: "Now, Fox, what's de use o' talkin' in dat way? You was de biggest man for meetin' at dis place, and said you didn't believe in dem Coclutch sperrits."

"Ah! Peter," replied Fox, "the sun was shining then, and I——"

"Come, come," said the first speaker, impatiently, "all that is nonsense! But I think we had better put a picket on the south side, for I've no doubt persons can pass along the edge of the swamp."

"Yes, sar; an' ole Mister Coclutch kin pass throo' it too, or over it, or any way," said the voice of a negro.

"Come," said the first speaker, "all that is mere non-

sense. Who'll volunteer to stand picket on the south side?"

"I move we 'pints Fox," said a voice.

"Me, too! me, too!" answered a dozen voices.

"Fox was mighty brave 'bout talkin'," added one, "an' he 'tended like he didn't b'lieve nothin'."

"But, my friends," said Fox, protestingly, "I don't think it necessary, and, besides, I have no arms."

"I kin len' you my yawger," said one.

"An' I'se got a hoss-pistol you kin git," said another.

"Oh," said Fox, laughing, "yawgers and 'hoss-pistols' haven't any back-bone. Who's got a repeater?"

"You can take mine," said the white man, who was Mr. Purst, handing the weapon to Fox, who, after examining it in the moonlight, remarked:

"This will do pretty well; but haven't you a larger one, Mr. Wheelless?"

"No," replied the individual addressed, speaking for the first time, as he stepped out into the moonlight. "Mine is rather smaller."

Fox examined the other pistol critically, and then said:

"Well, boys, I will go, though it is unnecessary, and I don't like this picket business! But if anything approaches without giving the signal it shall have a bullet in its head, if it carries a head, be it old Cocletz or the devil."

As Fox, taking unceremonious leave, strode around the corner of the "lint room" one of the negroes, whose eyes looked larger than was their wont, remarked:

"Dat white nigger is skeered mos' to death dis very minnit, an' he'd ruther turn es black es tar dan to run up wid dat ole Cocclutch or de boys."

There was a suppressed giggle from several at this remark, as Purst said :

“What is there to be scared at? No one is likely to come here, and no one knows anything about us.”

“Ah ! boss,” replied one, “you don’t know what dat ole Coclutch knows—him an’ de boys—dey knows a heap, ef you hear my racket; an’ ef you white folks wasn’t ’long wid us de grass wouldn’t grow under my foots ’twixt dis an’ home. I didn’t want to meet at dis place, nohow.”

“Oh, nonsense,” said Purst, turning away. “Let us get to work. Do you expect any more people, Dillard?”

“I specks more, boss,” said a stalwart fellow of medium height, but with the build of a Vulcan, “but I don’t reckon dey’s a comin’. I has done de bes’ I could, an’ maybe I has done a leetle too much, but I has talked to every nigger dat comes to my shop—sorter feelin’ ’roun’ like—an’ de heft on em had ruther, a heap ruther, fite wid de white folks dan to fite agin ’em. Hit ain’t ’cause dey loves de white folks es white folks, but dey has a heap o’ foolishness in dar heads ’bout dis ole miss an’ dat young master, an’ all dat. Fact is, a nigger is gwine to be a nigger, dead or ’live. Dey won’t take up wid new notions in a big swivet nohow; an’ when you spots a nigger dat you think has got a place in his head you can pour sense into, de chances is dat you has done los’ your munny.

“Well, there are some new men here, I see,” said Purst, encouragingly, glancing over the dusky crowd, who were, for the most part, lounging about and keeping an eye on the adjacent woods.

“One boss; des one. I hes talked an’ I hes talked,

but a nigger's head ain't kinky for nothin'. His shins is monstrous tender, but his head is es hard es a rock, an kin butt de bottom outen de bes' argyment in de books. But es I was a sayin', dey don't keer perticler 'bout white folks, *es white folks*, an' a idee has got into my head. Ef dey was whar dey didn't *know* de white folks dey mought do! See?"

"No, I don't see."

"Well, ef you ever 'spects to do much you has got to swap 'em about. Take de niggers from dis county, an' sen em to de nex' county, an' swap about dat way. Hit won't 'mount to much no other way. Bless de Lawd, ef de good day dat you say is a comin' was done come, I b'lieve my own mammy would bust my head open wid a axe 'fore she'd 'low me to stick a chunk o' fire to ole mistisses house;—an' dat's a fack."

"Oh, well," said Purst, impatiently, seeing that Peter Dillard's words had attracted the other negroes, who were gathering around, one by one, "you needn't set fire to widow's houses. No one is going to ask you to do that. When the proper time arrives, you can just light a gin-house here and there as a rallying signal, and as a sign that you mean business—march through the country and capture all who do not join you, and let it be seen that you are masters of the country. Let the women and children, who have been kind to you, alone, and the men, too, for that matter, if they will let *you* alone. But if they will not, then show your manhood and wipe them off the face of the earth. Let nothing stay your progress till you have swept the state, and have a man of your own choice in the governor's office. All this can be done, with little or no bloodshed, and with but little destruction of property, if the few white men left in the country are not

foolishly obstinate. That was John Brown's plan in Virginia, which would have been successful, but for the interference of the United States Government and its troops, and this is but a renewal of Brown's plans and efforts on a larger scale, with better organization, with more brains and money, and with the United States Government and its troops on *our* side. If the slave is ever to be free the next three months will decide, and it is in your power to solve the problem in your own favor. The present is your opportunity."

"Ef all you'se tole us, boss, fust an last, is true," remarked a tall, lank-looking negro, "de opportunity, es you calls it, looks good enough; but you was talkin' 'bout de white folks bein' obstinate, an' I kin tell you right now dey is gwine to be obstinate, an' don't you forgit it. Ef de niggers gits to cavortin like you's a talkin' about, ef dar wan't but one man lef' in the country, an' he didn't have nothin' to fight wid but a fence rail, he'd snatch up dat, an' pitch into all de niggers in sight, an' you kin bet your bottom dollar on dat!"

"The greater fool he!" said Wheeless, with a sneer. "But we have no use for cowards in this business. Are you a member of the 'Gang?'"

"No, boss, not yit, an' I ain't no coward, nuther. A man ain't got but one time to die, an' it don't make much diff'unce how, an' I don't want to freeze in dat country whar br'er Peter Dillard tells me dey gits ice in August; but I only didn't want you to fool yourself 'bout dese white folks fightin'—specially dem what looks like butter wouldn't melt in dey mouf."

"Rap, rap,—rap," sounded from the direction of the swamp, startling the whole party, and causing those who were sitting to spring to their feet. Half a dozen heads

were popped around the corner of the “lint room,” and Fox was discovered approaching.

“What is it, Fox,” was asked as soon as he came within easy speaking distance.

“Oh, nothing much, I guess,” replied Fox, with a slightly trembling voice, and some little show of excitement, “only something gliding over the swamp, which, as I went to shoot, suddenly disappeared. This so startled me that I dropped the pistol into the water. I want another.”

As Fox spoke, he was drawn in under the shadow of the gin-house, and when he ceased, a dozen questions were fired at him.

“What was it?” “How big was it?” “What did it look like?” “Did it fly, or des banish out o’ sight?”

“I don’t know; don’t ask me,” said Fox, answering all at once, “I want a pistol.”

“Oh, it was nothing but an owl, of course. Here, D’Elfons, you can take my repeater,” said Wheelless; and Fox, after exchanging weapons, immediately returned to his post, without replying to any more questions.

It was some time before the minds of the negroes could settle down to their usual equanimity; but still they could not resist the temptation to have their little jokes at Fox’s expense. Finally, the watchers at the corner of the lint room, seeing Fox strike a match, and light a cigar, felt reassured by his coolness, and responded to Peter Dillard’s call to “come in to de meetin’.”

Purst, on opening the meeting, explained apologetically to Wheelless that he had expected at least fifty colored men to be present; but that they were “making haste slowly,” on account of the caution necessary to be observed. Mr. Wheelless made a short address, explaining the object

and workings of the organization ; and, Peter Dillard having produced a roll of red tape, the ceremony of initiating the new member was begun. A moment later, it was noticed by some of the party that the faint cry of a fox hound was heard off to the northward, and soon after that others "opened," until a full pack had "given tongue." For a time they seemed to be bearing in the direction of the Cocletz place : but soon it was perceived that they were turning to the left ; and the ceremony, which had been somewhat interrupted, proceeded. Then again they appeared to be making straight for the gin-house, and there was considerable stir among the negroes as the candidate was invested with the "red string," tied in the third button-hole—or rather that was the proper place, but, as his sack coat had only one button-hole, it was tied in that—and then clipped with due ceremony. Every word of the interesting ceremony, however, typifying the "clipping of an atom from the loathsome body of slavery," was lost on the candidate, for he was looking over his shoulder in the direction of the chase, and had heard one of the negroes say, in a hoarse whisper, "It's cur'ous dat you don't hear nobody a hollerin'." The ceremony being over, the usual lecture seemed to have been forgotten ; and even the white men crouched and gazed in the direction of the chase, which was now sweeping along in the edge of the forest, and appeared about to pass by.

"It's mighty strange you don't hear nobody a whoopin' an' a hollerin'," again said a negro, in a low voice.

"Oh," said Wheelless, also in a whisper, "it is only some one's pack on a free hunt."

"'Zackly," said the new member, "ole Mr. Coclutch's, fur an instance ; he never do holler."

"H—sh !" came from several, as the direction of the

chase suddenly changed, and the pack, one—two—five—ten—twenty, all white, and in full cry, emerged from the shade of the forest, and bore directly down upon the gin-house. Peter Dillard got his “yawger” ready, as did the other party his “hoss pistol,” while the rest of them felt about the grounds for sticks and stones. But when the hounds got within a hundred feet of the gin-house, the pack divided, and commenced running around the building, leaping over and running against each other in their eager and mad haste.

“What in the h—ll does it mean?” ejaculated Wheeless, much excited.

Before a word could be spoken in reply, the clear blast of a horn was heard, and two horsemen in white attire dashed from the darkness of the forest straight in the direction of the gin-house.

“Old Coclutch an’ de boys!” shrieked Peter Dillard, firing his “yawger” and making a spring in the direction of the swamps, but finding himself the last to clear the gin-house. Fox at the same instant commenced firing rapidly, and the frightened fugitives beheld in that direction, six other horsemen bearing down on them from three different points of the compass.

“Keep together, men!” shouted Wheeless in a loud, commanding voice. “Follow me, and let us meet the first two!” he added, while he sprang in that direction with a gleaming bowie knife in his hand; but followed only by Purst and Peter Dillard.

A shrill whistle was sounded, and the single exclamation, “*Kuklos!*” was shouted, as the two horsemen dashed upon the three fugitives; who, turning at bay, prepared to receive the charge. Dillard clubbed his “yawger,” and Wheeless held aloft the bowie knife, which gleamed

wickedly in the bright light of the moon ; but the horsemen, noticing that the three were huddled together too closely for effective work reined their steeds close together without checking their speed, and, knee to knee, dashed headlong over the group, felling Dillard as they passed, by a vigorous blow from the loaded end of a heavy riding-whip, and hurling the other two to the earth by the force of contact with their horses. In a moment the white men were on their feet again, and running in opposite directions ; but the horsemen, wheeling quickly, bore down on them singly.

Purst, seeing that there was no hope of escape, threw up his hands and surrendered ; but Wheelless, turning upon his pursuer, prepared to spring aside as he charged, and to deal a telling blow with the knife, as he passed. Just as Wheelless made his spring and blow, however, the rider threw his horse upon his haunches, stopping him instantly ; and before Wheelless could recover from the momentum given to his body by the force he had hurled against the unresisting air, the horseman threw himself upon him, bearing him to the earth in a half-stunned condition ; and before he was fully aware of the cause of the quick and vigorous handling to which he was being subjected, a pair of "bracelets" manacled his wrists.

All the foregoing occupied but a few moments of time ; indeed, the struggle was over before the other six horsemen, who had instantly responded to the cabalistic call, could come up to give assistance. The negro, who had now partially recovered from the effects of the blow given him, was securely tied upon the back of a stout horse, and marched away, with a guard on either side, in the direction of the "Barrens ;" while his fellow dupes, whom no effort was made to arrest, had scattered in every direction,

"Knee to knee, they dashed headlong over the party."



and could be heard splashing through the shallow pools of the swamp, or “fording” through deep accumulations of leaves in the forest, with the occasional yelp of a demoralized hound, giving wings to their speed. The two white men were marched off in a direction exactly opposite to that taken by Peter Dillard and his guards; and after going about a mile, two horses were found hitched in the woods, upon which they were hurriedly mounted, and after more than an hour of rapid riding, they were halted in a forest, whose foliage was so dense, as hardly to allow a ray of the meridian moon to reach the earth, and through whose silent depths came gentle murmurs as of a mighty river, not far distant. Here all dismounted; and, the horses having been tied, the two unfortunates were placed side by side, and one who seemed to be the leader, addressed them by name:

“Charles L. Wheelless and William A. Purst, forty-eight hours ago you were arraigned before the Grand Cyclops, of the Lost Clan of Cocletz, and tried on a charge of conspiracy and sedition. After a fair trial, in which you were represented by counsel appointed for your defence, you were adjudged guilty of the charge, and sentenced to be Lynched. The order of that august court is now about to be executed. If you have anything to say in your own behalf, we will hear you; and if you can satisfy us that you are but blind tools, in the hands of cowardly wretches, worse than yourselves, we have authority to lessen the severity of your punishment. Speak!”

“We are neither fools nor cowards, sir,” said Wheelless, defiantly, “and have no confessions to make. If you have determined to carry your lawless instincts to the extent of committing murder, we only ask to be shot to death as honorable men, and not hanged like dogs.”

“We know not,” replied the leader, “what may be your definition of the term ‘honorable men’, but it is evident that you do not define the word ‘Lynched’ as we do. In your land of extremes it means to be hanged or shot, without judge or jury; but in the South it means the punishment which gallant old Charles Lynch inflicted on obstreperous Tories during the war of the Revolution. That punishment is ‘three dozen and three lashes upon the bare back.’”

“Lashes!” shouted Wheelless; “lashes upon the backs of free-born citizens of America! You can stab me to the heart, sir, but ——— lashes upon the backs of gentlemen! Where, sir, is your boasted civilization?”

“Ah! my friend,” rejoined the leader, with a touch of sadness in his tone, “you have not heard *me* apply that epithet to our people. Civilization! *You* are civilized, —you and John Brown and others who come here to incite an inferior, and by nature a savage race, to burn our homes and murder our helpless ones;—you, and those who send you here, and back you with money and philanthropy—you, I say, are *civilized*! We prefer to be called gentle savages. “Ghouls,” he added, turning to his men, “do your duty!”

The two misguided men submitted, with Spartan firmness, to the extreme penalty of that “law” to which an admiring people gave the name of its originator, gallant old Charles Lynch, of Campbell, then a part of Bedford county, in Virginia. During the dark days of the Revolution—Virginia’s *real* rebellion—Col. Lynch commanded a battalion of scouts composed of as recklessly daring a body of men as ever shouted the “Rebel yell” into the ears of a terrified foe. The command, being an independent one, was often divided into companies, or even sub-

divided into platoons and squads, for special service in all parts of Virginia, and frequently down in the Carolinas; and woe to the marauder or Tory who fell into their hands! He was taken to headquarters at the Lynch Mansion, and after being tried by the “court,” composed of Col. Lynch as judge, Capt. Robert Adams as commonwealth’s attorney, and Capt. Thomas Calloway as counsel for the defence, or *vice versa*, was, if found guilty, tied to a walnut tree near the aforesaid mansion, and given “forty save one” stripes upon the bare back by a “high private” of the command, and made to shout “Liberty forever!” This famous old mansion was burnt a few years ago, but a handsomer one now stands in its place; and the old walnut, gnarled and ancient, with its top torn away by the blasts of more than a hundred winters, is still standing, and may be seen near the left bank of the Staunton, which is there the local name for the Roanoke river.*

*The success of the British arms in the year 1780 caused a conspiracy on the part of many Scotch settlers living along the base of the Blue Ridge mountains, in Virginia, and they actually attempted to levy war against the Commonwealth. This conspiracy was crushed by the gentlemen above named, who were brothers-in-law, and men of wealth and influence; yet the most severe punishment inflicted by them was stripes. They received the active co-operation of Col. Wm. Preston, another gentleman of great influence, and after the Revolution it became necessary for the Virginia Legislature, by special enactment, to protect these gentlemen from civil suits for having taken the law into their own hands. (See Hanning’s Statutes-at-Large, Vol. XI. pp. 134–5.) The gallant Gen. James Dearing, who fell near Appomattox, and his sisters, Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Faunthroy, in Campbell county, Virginia, are descendants of Col. Lynch. The latter lady resides on the site of the old Lynch mansion. Col. Henry W. and Dr. W. T. Adams, on Staunton River, in Campbell and Pittsylvania counties, are descendants of Capt. Robert Adams, and Capt. Thomas Calloway has numerous descendants in Beaford and Campbell coun-

The two misguided men, being again invested with their clothing, were conducted on foot to the margin of the Tennessee river, near by ; and having professed to be supplied with sufficient means to defray their expenses homeward, were put into a dugout canoe which had evidently been brought to this lonely spot for that purpose. After being solemnly warned that if ever again seen in Alabama, they would be lynched according to the Northern understanding of that word, they were pushed out into the current, and sent adrift with the parting valediction, "bon voyage !" to which Wheeless, as he plied the paddle vigorously, shouted back :

"I go now in weakness, but shall come again in strength. You have taken the blood of my back ; I shall take the blood of your hearts. All of your names shall be revealed to me, and all the powers of hell shall not save you, nor any of yours, from my just vengeance."

"Ah !" said one of the party, musingly, as if speaking to the gently whispering waters, "that is no idle, boastful threat ! Wandering Jew turned Puritan ; we have named thee Carpet-bagger ! But thy name also is Legion !"

ties. The patriots, in that section in those distant days, had a song, the refrain of which was :

"Huzza for Captain Bob, Colonel Lynch and Calloway ;
They never let a Tory off until he shouts out 'Liberty !'"

CHAPTER IX.

A PURITAN SLAVEHOLDER.

"When two know it, how can it be a secret?"

—MARSTON'S FAWN.

*"When I was blind, my son, I did miscall
My sordid vice of avarice, true thrift."*

—MAY'S OLD COUPLE.

MR. FRED DEADERICK, of whom the reader has already heard a good deal, sat in an easy chair in his library, a few days after the occurrences narrated in the last chapter, reading, with intense interest, a letter which he had just received, bearing the post-mark, "New Orleans, La." His surroundings were unique, if not elegant. Heavy curtains of Spanish hemp and silk, in elegant brocatello designs, shaded the windows; every foot of the floor was covered with Turkish rugs of various and handsome patterns, and the furniture, made in the antique style, but brave in all the glare of varnish and gold-leaf, was evidently of very recent manufacture, and gave one a feeling that in selecting it a strained effort had been made at effect and display. The carving was too elaborate, and done in mahogany, instead of honest old oak, and the upholstering was in purple plush instead of the homely sheep or calf skin befitting the style intended to be imitated. The shelves were moderately well filled with a heterogeneous collection of works—for the most part very recent ones—in gaudy bindings and plain muslin

covers, from the trim encyclopædias down to the most flashy and trashy of the day, some of which latter lay on a centre-table of variegated Tennessee marble, on which the gentleman's heels were resting, as he nervously and vigorously puffed an odorous "Buenosisimo Habana."

As he bent with deep interest over the letter, which he was reading for the second time with increasing interest, he could not fail to impress one as an unusually fine specimen of manly comeliness. His athletic but finely-proportioned form, his closely-clipped "ambrosial curls," and his silky blonde moustache and side-whiskers, gave an impression of a modernized Apollo. But despite his comeliness and wealth, and his possession of qualities of mind and heart which, if allowed to make themselves manifest, or rather, if they had not been overshadowed and smothered by a ruling passion, could not have failed to make him a popular man, he was still one of the most unpopular men in the country.

He had come, when quite a youth, from Connecticut with his father, who was at that time one of the moneyed men in a firm of contractors who had undertaken a never-to-be-finished contract of vast magnitude—that of rendering navigable for large steamers the Mussel Shoals of the Tennessee river, below Decatur, Alabama, where for a dozen or more miles that mighty stream foams and rages in alternating cascades, maelstroms and sluices, over against and around the mighty barriers presented to its passage by that remarkable vein of limestone which, coming out of Canada and forming the Niagara Falls, sweeps down, in a broad, fertilizing belt, through New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, in which latter state it forms the Natural Bridge, Weir's and numberless other caves and caverns, and separates into two branches,

one passing through and forming the blue-grass region of Kentucky, and the other, a similar region in Tennessee, to come together again in North Alabama, and form the broad barrier alluded to, and sweep thence in a southwesterly direction, to lose itself in the great valley of the Mississippi. It was said that Mr. Deaderick's father made more money by the final abandonment, on the part of the people, of the great undertaking, than he could possibly have made by the completion of the contract. His death, about the time that the affairs of the abandoned enterprise were finally settled up, left his son and only heir, the possessor of considerable wealth, a part of which was already invested in land and negroes. Being enterprising and ambitious, the young man determined to become one of the largest planters in the country, and thus show his equality, in one respect, at least, with the lordly planters whose condescending civility toward his shrewd, money-making father had often excited the ire of his boyish heart. In pursuance of this determination, he was aided by his inherited shrewdness. Plantations were bought, agents were sent to Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia, to purchase slaves, the most energetic overseers were employed, and the only demand made of them was to excel all planters in their respective neighborhoods, in the number of bales of cotton produced *per capita*. The one great idea to make immense crops of cotton, to pay for more land and slaves, to make more cotton, and so on, *ad infinitum*, seemed to absorb every instinct of his being, and yet he honestly believed the better people of the country were “down on” him only because he was not “native and to the manner born,” and came from the wrong side of the old Mason and Dixon's line. But why the negroes should evince less respect for him than for his

overseers, who, it must be admitted, sometimes wielded the lash, but always in violation of his orders, was more than he could comprehend. Perhaps had he been at "The Oaks'" quarters and heard Mammy's remonstrance with her son Henry, when that worthy first asked the old woman's consent to his marriage with one of the belles of the Deaderick home plantation, he might have exercised one of the predominant faculties peculiar to his native section and have made a shrewd "guess."

"What!" said the aristocratic human exotic, "Marry one o' dem Deaderick' niggers? I's sprised at you, Henry, dat I is! You a Anderson-Styode, an' your great-*great* gran' daddy befo' you a Anderson, dat never was bought and sold in his born days, an' used to belong to Mars' Kurnel Anderson, dat fit in de Revolutionary war, an' whipped dat ole Britisher Tarleton, an' got his camp, an' took his fiddle 'way from 'im, what de young marster has got in de big house yonder dis blessed minute—you talk 'bout marryin' one o' dem ornery niggers! Bless de Lawd, you's a disgrace to your fetchin'-up!"

"Humph!" ejaculated the enamored negro. "What ole Mars' Kurnel Anderson done a thousan' years ago ain't doin' me no good! For all you know, Liza Jane's way-back-yonder gran' daddy's ole marster might o' fit Jules Seezer, an' got his camp, an' took his *banjer* 'way from him! I don't find fault with Liza Jane for belongin' to Mars' Fred Deaderick."

"No; poor creetur, she couldn't help it; but ef her mammy, ef she had one, had o' got de lawyers to write to de ars-in-law up to Ohio, dey wouldn't 'lowed her to be sold off from de balance of her folks, an' to a Yankee, too. Bless de Lawd, don't *I* know quality folks an' don't *I* know dey wouldn't?"

“How you know dey is quality folks up to Ohio?”

“How I know? Wa’nt dey kin to dat Liza Jane’s ole marster; an’ wan’t he bred an’ born in Ole Ferginny? Humph!”

“Mars’ Fred Deaderick is rich es anybody *you* know; an’ can’t quality folks be bred an’ born no whar but in Ole Ferginny?”

“Dey *may* be, but I has my doubts; anyhow, de fust startin’ of ’em is in Ole Ferginny, or mighty nigh ’bout dar. Es for richness, dat don’t make quality. It’s fambly, nigger; an’ I wouldn’t give de young marster’s little finger nail for dat whole Deaderick an’ his whole seed, breed an’ generation, whatever dey is.”

“I’d like to know what you’s got agin Mars’ Fred Deaderick,” grumbled the son, sullenly.

“Got agin him!” exclaimed the old woman, angrily. “He might weed his own row, ’dout any ’sturbance from me, ef you didn’t want to marry dat gal. But ain’t he one o’ dem outlandish folks from ’way up in Novy Scoshy—one o’ dem stingy Yankees dat never had a nigger to his back till he come here and bought ’em? An’ now dat he’s got ’em, does he know how to treat ’em? When dey cuts up and, an’ fites, an’ steals, as some of ’em is always doin’, instead of havin’ ’em hit nine an’ thirty, like a gentleman, an’ bein’ done wid it, he says dat is barb’ous an’ den does what’s a heap barb’ouser—locks ’em up all night by demselves wid nothin’ to eat; cuts off der rashins to a scant half ’lowance; ’fuses to give ’em good clo’s, an’ blankets, an’ socks, an’ no boots in de winter, only shoes; won’t ’low tother niggers to speak to ’em; writes ‘rogue’ an’ sich on dar backs, an’ makes ’em go roun’ disgracin’ demselves an him, too! Don’t talk to me about marryin’ none o’ his niggers an’

you a Anderson-Styode, an' none o' your kinfolks never had no disgrace put on 'em since de worl' was made. Bless de Lord, I'd rather see you laid in de cold ground ! So dar ! You done hear my racket !”

This was the old woman's way of “putting her foot down,” and meant that one had as well be “calling coo-sheep to the moon” as to continue the argument. But Henry carried his point, nevertheless, by getting the young master to promise to make the “muggins nigger” an aristocratic “Anderson-Styode” by purchase, should the opportunity ever occur, in addition to what good old Parson Elliott should effect by means of the marriage ceremony.

When Mr. Deaderick had finished reading his letter very carefully for the second time, he threw himself back in his chair with a long, low whistle, which indicated a mixture of emotions, the chief of which was astonishment ; and, half turning, so as to get a view of his handsome person in a large French-plate mirror, he addressed the image of himself :

“ Well, Fred, my boy, this beats the beater and tumbles down old and, you must admit, rather scurvy plans, to set up new and magnificent ones. Who could have imagined such a possibility ! Ah ! my boy, if you are only half so sharp as you think yourself, you can make a ten strike that will not only pay for any loss you may sustain through the hasty sale of your niggers, but will pay for every cursed one of them twice over, even if you should hold on to them and let them be freed on your hands, as they would be, law or no law, war or no war ! Let's see ; you've sold about thirty from this place and can sell the wife of that crippled rascal Henry and her brother, too, to Stewart. By the by, you can put ‘a wheel within a wheel’ there. You're not getting enough for

the whelps, but these devils pretend to have awfully humane feelings, and will not buy a nigger they want unless they have money enough to take the whole family. We'll not bother much longer, but will take the balance—let's see, on all the places about two hundred—down to New Orleans, and once there we'll see that they forget they have kinfolks and didn't spring, like Typhon of old, directly from the earth. And then we'll see about this other matter. Half a million in real estate in the very heart of such a city as New Orleans isn't picked up every day, Fred, my boy! You'd be the biggest fool among the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers to let such a chance slip when you can have the whole game in your own hands. Besides, there isn't a handsomer girl, North or South, free or slave, nor one more modest and refined than that little, black-eyed French devil. No; you needn't except Florence Seymour, nor that pretty little school girl, Mollie Dillard. You always did have a sort of *penchant* for that little French imp, and who cares if a very small proportion of her blood is derived from the negro race? Haven't some of our foremost thinkers—men and women whose every thought is an inspiration—always claimed that our Puritan blood is a little too blue, and needs a liberal admixture of a warmer and richer strain; and haven't they, with singular unanimity, pointed to the negro as furnishing that strain? Have our Susan B. Anthonys, Lucy Stones, Elizabeth Cady Stantons, Wm. Lloyd Garrisons, Wendell Phillips, Thad. Stevenses, and hosts of others, lived in vain? No, indeed! And half a million, whether the strain be richer or what not, turns the scales. So, good-bye, Miss Florence Seymour, you haughty, little puss of a renegade Puritan! You shall turn up that pretty nose no more

at Fred Deaderick, Esquire. But you shall not marry that devil, Stewart, for all that. Trust me for having a hand in shaping your destiny, and in 'rough-hewing its ends' pretty lively, too, whether you will or no. As for the niggers, I'll write to New Orleans to Zeke Goodrich—good Puritan name—to come up and help me off with them to his city, and then, after sleeping on my plans, I'll go to see that 'Ogre of The Oaks' for a trade."

While Mr. Deaderick is writing his letters, we will inform the reader that he received the one which astonished and interested him so greatly from a young lawyer in New Orleans. He had suspected that Mr. Stewart, or some of his people, knew more about an indignity put upon himself by a crowd of reckless young fellows, playing the role of materialized spirits, in consequence of a feature in his system of dealing with his negroes, of which they did not approve, than they cared to make public, and had finally ascertained, through a chain of circumstantial evidence, that Fox was the leader of the gang. He had no sooner gained this information than he was determined to be avenged. There were three courses open to him ; to hold the master responsible, appeal to the law or give the slave a "white man's chance" in a bout at fisticuffs ; for the slave, as a rule, was not permitted to appeal to the code of honor, that "barbarous code" which, whatever else may be said of it, puts the gentleman, who has cultivated his intellect chiefly, on an equal footing with the bully whose only care has been to develop his muscle. As he knew the adopting of the first course would be attended with very serious consequences, and the other two would make him the butt of ridicule, at the very least, he determined to "bide his time." He had always doubted if Fox and his sister were really what

they claimed, and were believed to be ; and he determined to spend a little money to possess himself of all facts concerning them, half suspecting that they were persons of some consequence, hiding away under the ægis of assumed slavery on account of some evil deed of the former. So he had offered the young lawyer, from whom he had just heard, a very liberal reward for such information as he could obtain, without exciting attention or inquiry on the part of relatives or friends, should they have either in that city.

Having finished his letter he sounded a bell, and said to the servant, who appeared almost instantly :

“Mount my horse, now standing at the gate, and take this letter to the office ; and, I say,” he called, as the servant started on the errand, “you know there has been some talk amongst you niggers of a prank played, as is supposed, by Fox, or Mr. D’Elfons, on a certain gentleman. Now, I want you all to know that if such a thing ever occurred at all, the gentleman who is supposed to have played the prank, Mr. D’Elfons, had nothing to do with it. And if I ever hear of any of you connecting his name, or any one’s name, with that affair, or any affair like it, I’ll make you think the day of judgment has come ! Do you hear ? Do you understand ? Now go !”

As the negro left the house, with a full grin illuminating his countenance, he chuckled to himself :

“It’s cur’ous dat dese white folks dat ain’t been fetched up wid niggers always thinks dey can’t hear nothin’, an’ can’t understand nothin’, an’ is ’ternally bellerin’ at ’em, ‘Does you hear dis?’ an’ ‘Does you understan’ dat?’ an’ all de time dey’s ’feared you’ll understan’ too much. I understans one thing ; dat man is ’feard Fox is gwine to duck ’im in de creek agin ; yah ! yah !”

The next morning, after a late breakfast, Mr. Deaderick rode over to "The Oaks," and after having been in the parlor with Mr. Stewart for less than half an hour, he left the house, looking angry and red in the face, and galloped furiously away.

An hour afterward, when Fox came in, Mr. Stewart remarked to him :

"Fox, Deaderick has been here on a strange errand this morning."

"He doesn't want me to join another Red String Gang, does he?" said Fox, with a laugh.

"I think it more likely that he wishes to put you into some chain gang. Hold on to your temper now, I am going to tell you a startling fact. He wishes to buy you."

"The whelp!" ejaculated Fox, with a laugh, making a motion with his hands as if wringing the neck of an animal.

"Yes," said Mr. Stewart, laughing at Fox's gestures, "and I will not tell you the rest, for fear you will put your pantomimic threat into actual execution."

"Do you think he suspects that I betrayed—but no, none of the negroes suspect me, and he does not know that Purst betrayed him to me, or that any one suspects him of having had any knowledge of the conspiracy of the Red String Gang."

"No; nothing wrong there. He spoke of you in the very highest terms, and I really believe does not wish to work any evil on you, personally, if he could carry out his designs. He says he will not sell Henry's wife for *money*, he wishes to *trade* her and her brother, and will throw in half a dozen others for good measure, and that he shall take them to New Orleans. We must see about that after he has had time to get over his disappointment and anger."

CHAPTER X.

MARS, TERPSICHORE AND CUPID.

*"'Tis when the rose is wrapp'd in many a fold
Close to its heart, the worm is wasting there
Its life and beauty."*—CARLOS WILCOX.

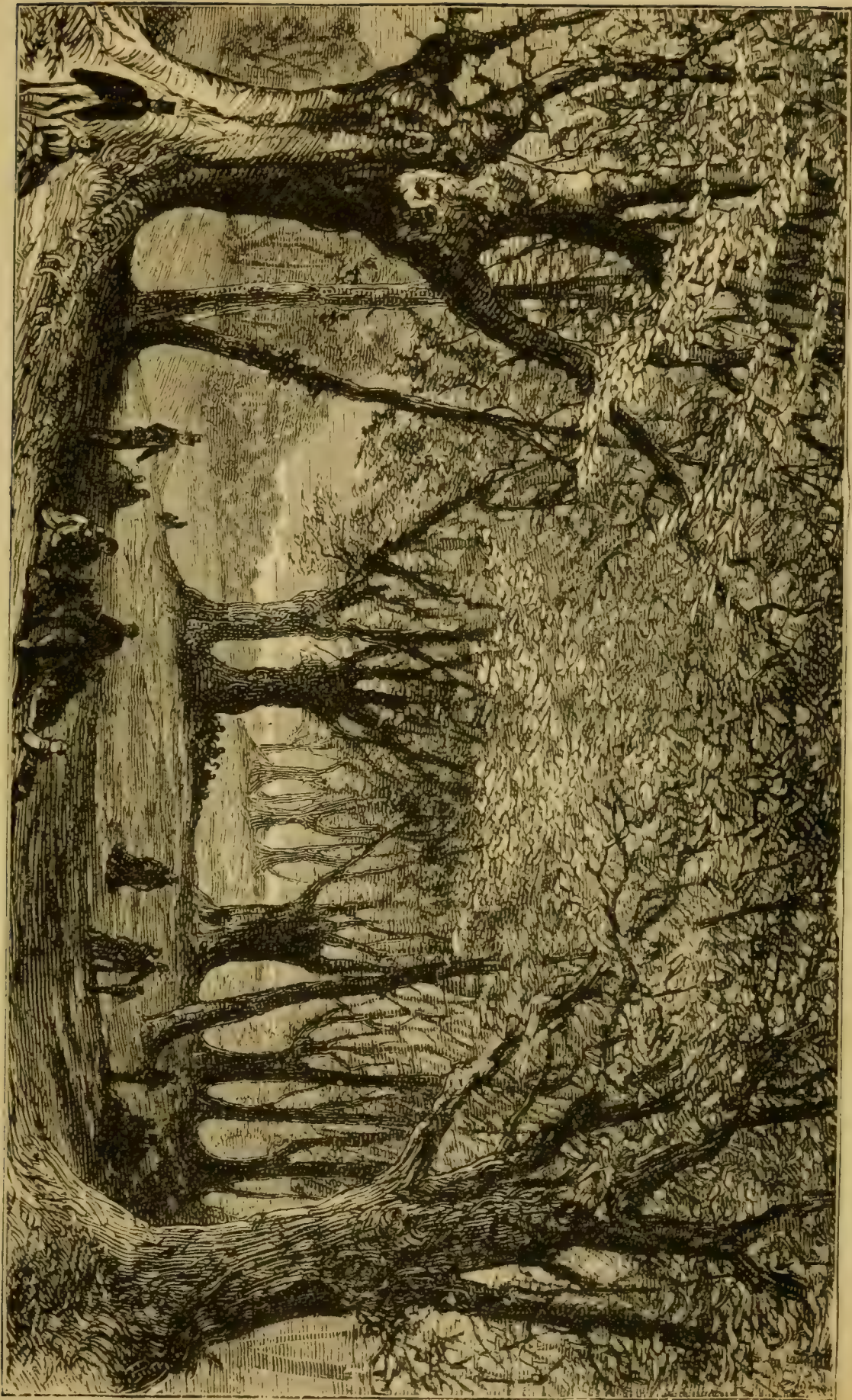
*"There's no way to make sorrow light
But in the noble bearing."*—W. ROWLEY.

THE people of the neighborhoods around Beaver Lake were all astir on the lovely morning appointed for the "last pic-nic;" the last, because on the morrow the company which has been formed with Mr. Howard, as captain, and young Flournoy, as first lieutenant, and to which all the society young men, of the surrounding country, with very few exceptions, belonged, was to take the cars for "The seat of war in Virginia." Ah! what a solemn meaning had those words for the timid maiden, who, on this day, perhaps for the last time upon earth, will look with eyes that smile, while the heart weeps, upon the manly form of him whose soul has held sweet converse with her own!—for the doting mother, who, to-day, will lightly banter her darling boy while her thoughts brood in agony over a picture of his loved form lying stark upon the field of death, with his lusterless young eyes fixed in a stony gaze upon the blue vault of heaven. Ah! maiden; ah! mother, vain are the prayers of your souls that the bitter cup of war may not be pressed to the lips of your beloved South, and that the besom of destruc-

tion and death may not be permitted to sweep her lovely plains and happy homes ! The hand of Fate is preparing to sow ashes over the pleasant places in your memories ! But despair not, for God doeth all things well ! “ Whom He loveth He chasteneth.”

Extensive preparations had been made at the pic-nic grounds, on the margin of the little lake, whose calm, pellucid waters reflected the beautiful surroundings with such accuracy and distinctness as to give one a fancy that it might be the *entrepot* of an antipodal land of fairy beauty and brightness, at which had been collected all that is most beautiful and charming in nature. In the centre of an irregular circle of beech, sycamore and sweet-gum trees, whose tangled and contorted roots, on the side next the lake, dipped themselves into the liquid mirror, stood an ample platform on which the votaries of Terpsichore were expected to do sacrifice to that merry mistress of the cithern ; and here and there, in every secluded or romantic spot, were scattered “lover’s seats,” so called, perhaps, because not sufficiently large to admit of occupancy by more than two persons at a time.

At an early hour in the forenoon the guests commenced to arrive. The cold and stiff formality of that phase of society which moves and exists only to obey the laws of prim conventionality had not impressed the belles and beaux of that happy rural region with the solemn fact that it is “not elegant” to appear early at a social gathering. Before ten o’clock, substantial family carriages, elegant phaetons and trim, light buggies had begun to bring in their freights of youth and beauty, while from every plantation came spring-wagons and “Jerseys,” laden with substantial and sumptuous viands, which the happy and self-important butlers and waiters,



The Picnic Grounds.

assisted by coquettish ladies' maids and temporarily-furloughed nurses, immediately distributed upon the long parallel tables erected upon a shady lawn and covered with snowy linen.

Before the hour of noon arrived merry groups were chatting here and there, and solitary couples were strolling along the vistas that opened among the scattered and spreading trees, and on the platform a dozen or more couples were gliding to the plaintive music of Strauss and Wagner. Gray uniforms were so numerous as to make those who still wore citizens attire conspicuous. Among the latter was Mr. Stewart, whom we find promenading with one of the little cousins who, at his instigation, had exacted from Miss Seymour a promise to attend.

"I don't know, cousin," said the little maiden, in reply to an enquiry. "At first Dr. Hansel said Miss Florence could not come at all, and when she told him she had made me a positive promise, which she desired not to violate, he was really *angry*! And yesterday, when the carriage came for us, and Miss Florence was preparing to accompany us home, he sent Jane to say that she could not go until to-day, although he *well* knew, as Jane said, that his coachman is sick and unable to drive. Miss Florence told us at parting that she should see us to-day, but I fear we shall be disappointed."

While the young lady was uttering her forebodings, however, the subject of them was alighting at a distant part of the grounds from a handsome "Gosling" buggy, driven by her honored step-father, and drawn by a high-stepping fast trotter, the property of a friend in Barrensville, who could not attend. Fast trotters and very small,

light buggies were, at the time, very fashionable in that section. Racing, as an amusement, which had always been one of the passions of the young gentry of the South, was gradually growing into disrepute in consequence of adventurers and professional sporting men having entered the field ; and fast trotters, driven by their owners, were taking the place of racers ridden by jockeys. And now every young gentleman in North Alabama felt that, in order to be considered "a blood," it was as necessary for him to own and drive a fast horse and a Gosling buggy as to grow a mustache. That description of "turnout," however, was considered as belonging exclusively to the "young blood" or "wild-oat-sower," and there were many winks and smiles among the young gentlemen who immediately surrounded Miss Seymour, as the dignified, but not very agile, doctor of divinity felt his backward way to the earth from the elevated seat of the elegant vehicle.

Mr. Flournoy, who looked every inch a soldier in his neat lieutenant's uniform, immediately monopolized Miss Seymour, giving Dr. Hansel to understand that it was his purpose to relieve him of all responsibility for the young lady's pleasant entertainment. Miss Seymour, however, had pleasant greetings to respond to from numerous other beauties and their beaux before she was permitted to draw upon Mr. Flournoy's fund of entertainment, so that a full hour had passed before she found herself seated with him in a romantic spot, at the foot of a spreading beech, whose drooping branches almost kissed the water of the lake, where a curvature of the shore-line encroached upon the grove, forming a secluded miniature bay. Here the two engaged in a lively duel of words and wit for a time, when Mr. Flournoy suddenly exclaimed :

"Ha ! here comes that charming little Miss Anderson,

dragging her complaisant cousin away from the dance. I knew she would find us out and not let me retain possession of you ; and I shall revenge myself by making love to her.”

“Oh, Miss Florence,” exclaimed the young lady, as she came up, with almost breathless excitement, “I am going to win a diamond ring from Cousin Charles ! He has bet me that Fulton did not invent the steamboat, and you are the umpire !”

“I fear he has won, dear,” replied Miss Seymour, with a smile at the young lady’s excited manner. “Fulton certainly did not invent the boat, and steam is not an invention.”

“Oh, Miss Florence, what a tease !” laughed the little maiden ; “I mean, of course, that Fulton invented the method of applying the power of steam to machinery, and was the first to propel a vessel by it.”

“I am sorry to have to decide against you still,” said the young lady, with a sympathizing smile. “The first boat ever propelled by steam had its machinery constructed, put in, and worked by a person named James Rumsey ; and this was done twenty years before Fulton did his work, and while Fulton was yet a school boy.”

“Then why didn’t Rumsey become famous instead of Fulton ?” asked the disappointed young lady.

“Simply, because the world gives its applause and honors only to final success, which confers a substantial benefit upon the human family.”

“Oh, then, perhaps, it is debatable. Let us hear all about it before the decision against me is made final.”

“I see that I must tell a long story in the capacity of umpire,” said Miss Seymour, laughing and resuming her seat, “to convince a young lady who will not take a sim-

ple assertion as a final decision. It is a well-authenticated though not generally-known fact, that, about the year 1780, a young man living in Virginia, at or near Shepherdstown, and employed by the Potomac Navigation Company, conceived the idea of propelling boats by means of a power to be derived from confined steam. He commenced work on an engine intended to test the practicability of that idea, and for four years his leisure time and all the money he could command were devoted to the work. He was thought to be crazy by the simple country people around him, and a path along which he was in the habit of promenading, while trying to solve the many difficult problems which presented themselves to his mind in the course of his work of invention and construction, is, to this day, called 'crazy Rumsey's path.' Despite the taunts and jeers of the thoughtless people around him, and the skepticism as to the possibility of the undertaking on the part of the more intelligent, the young man persevered and finished his engine. He fitted it to a small boat in which it occupied only a few feet of space, and the boiler had a capacity for only five gallons of water. It was imperfect, of course, but it worked, and on one of its trial trips no less a person than George Washington, the father of his country, and the greatest of all Virginians, was a passenger. Gen. Washington's mind did not seem to grasp the great possibilities of the invention, even when he saw himself propelled, in the rude little boat, at the rate of four miles an hour against the current of the Potomac; but he gave Mr. Rumsey a certificate setting forth the novel performance of his engine. Armed with this, and with his small possessions converted into cash, Mr. Rumsey took his model over to England, for the purpose of finding more skilled workmen and better tools

for the work than were to be had at that period in this country. All of this occurred when Fulton was a youth, and nearly twenty years before he built his first engine. From the similarity of his first engine to the one which Rumsey constructed and took over to England, it is believed that Fulton hunted up and got possession of Rumsey's old engine.”

“I see that I have lost,” said the little miss, ruefully, “but please tell me why the Virginian did not continue his work, and reap his just reward of honors and riches.”

“Ah! that is a sad story. Rumsey spent all of his money, and had to work at other things to avoid being sent to prison for debt. The people in England, with whom he became acquainted, looked upon his invention as being of no practical worth, and regarded his model only as a wonderfully ingenious toy. Thoroughly discouraged by his poverty, and by his failure to interest some person, possessed of means, in his invention, he was advised by some charitably disposed persons to deliver a lecture, and exhibit his model for money. Gen. Washington's certificate had secured for him the notice of some very fashionable and influential people in London, and these, prompted, no doubt, partly by a feeling of charity, advertised the intended lecture quite extensively among the fashionable people of the metropolis. When the momentous night arrived, Rumsey felt that his final success was assured, for his door-keeper took in more than a thousand dollars, and the hall was filled with the wealth and fashion of the city. This unexpected good fortune overcame him. The revulsion of feeling was too great for his physical strength. He arose to speak, and lifted his hand, as if to make a gesture, but no sound issued from his lips, and he sank into

a chair. Weak and speechless, he was taken to his garret, and within a few days died."

"What a sad, sad story!" exclaimed the young lady, sobered for the moment. "Well, Cousin Charles, I have lost the diamond and you have won the—the—what I bet."

"Which was not your heart, I hope," exclaimed Mr. Flournoy, "for I have designs upon that myself, and will bet you a diamond against 'the—the—what I *want*,' that you can't row me across the lake."

"But I don't want to bet for valuable things with *gentlemen*," replied the young lady, with some embarrassment.

"Monsh, do you hear that?" exclaimed the young man, with a laugh. "Rather severe on you; eh?"

"Oh, but he is my cousin."

"Oh, but I'm a soldier," replied Mr. Flournoy, mimickingly, "which is, or should be, a better claim; so step into my bark, Miss Clare, and we will fancy that, hand in hand, we are floating down the tide of time, or that I am old Charon ferrying you across the Styx, only you are to do the ferrying."

The banter was accepted, and soon the unskillfully-handled oars were fretting the placid water of the lake, while occasional shouts of laughter from the merry couple awoke the echoes of the woodland.

Mr. Stewart had desired, above all things, the opportunity, which he now had, to speak with Miss Seymour alone. He had determined that he would not go off to the war until he had spoken into her ear the words of one of the inspired, "Place me as a seal upon thy heart; for love is strong as death!" Yet, when the opportunity, so long and earnestly desired, had been made for him, he was strangely embarrassed, and his thoughts seemed to revolve around the subject of which he wished to speak

with such rapidity that he strove in vain to capture a connected one and deliver it in words. The ready topics of the society man came naturally to his lips, and he talked to still the wild tumult in his brain ; but even the half-averted face, the flushed cheeks, the downcast eyes, the slightly-trembling voice, which all told of a sympathizing tumult in the heart of his beloved, failed to speak to his own emotions the magic words, “Peace ; be still.” But they were stilled in a very prosaic manner, for soon the voice of Dr. Hansel came, greeting :

“Ah ! Mr. Stewart, I am glad to have come across you in my ramble. I have been hunting some one who can tell me about those Cocletz spirits, of which the colored people are telling such terrible tales.”

How calm was the young man then ! He felt if some benignant Cocletz, or other spirits, would only swoop down upon the old gentleman and bear him in safety into the antipodal fairy-forest, the trunks of whose trees were caused by the wavelets from the distant boat to twist and writhe like huge serpents engaged in a mad endeavor to dance the kan-kan, how he should ever love them in the future, and how, at the present moment, he could pour into the ear of the loved one by his side, a rhythm of love’s soft language, such as would cause even the lute-hearted Israfel to stand mute in rapt admiration ! But his opportunity was lost, and, feeling that he was not destined to have another so favorable very shortly, it was with no amiable feeling that he replied :

“I do not interest myself in such idle stories, sir,” but feeling ashamed of the spirit which had prompted the ungracious reply, he instantly added : “Indeed, doctor, I have heard little or nothing of the recent antics of the ‘spirits,’ as the negroes call them, and to give you a

history of the Cocletz Clan of Indians, whose extinction furnished the foundation for the negroes superstitions respecting them, would require too heavy a tax upon Miss Seymour's time and patience."

"Oh, no, indeed," said the young lady, smiling sweetly upon her companion, "the mysterious is always charming to me. I should like much to hear the legend."

"And there is something very mysterious," broke in the old gentleman, "about this affair of which the colored people are talking so much."

"What is their story, doctor?" asked the young man, abstractedly.

"Oh, the white people are talking about it, too, all over the grounds; but no one seems to know much. It seems that a man by the name of Peter Dillard was on his way, with some friends, to visit a neighbor after dark. In passing through a field they heard the Cocletz hounds—themselves immaterial spirits—and soon the hounds and a number of the Indian spirits surrounded the party, and selecting Peter Dillard from the others, whom they did not molest, they bore him off through the air upon a phantom horse, which arose out of the ground, with fiery eyes and smoking nostrils. They passed over forests and fields, till finally, in passing a farm house, a cock crew and instantly Dillard fell to the earth, with a perfumed veil enwrapping his head and face, and the spirits vanished. Then the earth sank away from him; the clouds came down and embraced him; the zephyrs rocked him as if in a cradle, and little angels fanned him with their wings until he fell asleep. When he returned to consciousness, he was lying near a forester's cabin, in the Barrens, and the sun was shining in his face."

"Quite a remarkable story," laughed the young man,

as he arose and offered his arm to Miss Seymour. “But they are ringing the dinner bell for us, and I fear we are not entertaining Miss Seymour.”

“On the contrary,” said the young lady, taking the offered arm, “my curiosity is greatly excited, and what I have heard prompts me to exact of you a promise to give us the legend of the Indian tribe, whose spirits wander from the ‘happy hunting grounds,’ and play such fantastic tricks upon mundane mortals.”

After dinner, Mr. Stewart, seeing that others did not intend for Miss Seymour’s society to be monopolized by any one individual, and being determined not to be drawn by Dr. Hansel into a repetition of the Cocletz legend, with only himself as audience, proposed a musical entertainment, from the lake upon boats made into a pontoon raft, by means of lumber from the tables. All of the musically inclined entered into the spirit of the adventure, and the merry party, including Miss Seymour, were floated over the bright water until the echoes of their tuneful voices had been tried, from every point of the lake, and the rapidly-declining sun had reminded unromantic mammas on the shore that this day, like all others, must come to a close.

Mr. Stewart, after seeing Miss Seymour seated by the side of her step-father, behind the spirited, but well-trained trotter, lingered in conversation with several military members of the party. Finally, bidding adieu to those whom he should not see again until he should join them in Virginia, he left the grounds, in a quick canter, accompanied by Fox.

They had ridden a mile or more, with Dr. Hansel’s buggy in full view, on which they were gaining, though the old gentleman was driving at a good rate of speed,

when the buggy entered a small stream, and there was a pause of a moment, to allow the horse to slake his thirst. As the buggy emerged from the stream, the horsemen noticed that by some means, Dr. Hansel had lost possession of the reins, which were dragging at the horse's heels.

Mr. Stewart instantly spurred his horse forward, and seeing the old gentleman about to spring from the buggy, shouted to him to keep his seat. The caution, however, was not heeded, for the next moment the doctor sprang from the vehicle, with the evident intention of going quickly forward to seize the horse by the bridle, as at the moment he was moving in a quick, springy walk, preparatory to resuming his speed. Anticipating the effect of the sudden wrench given to the vehicle, and the noise of the old man's fall to the ground, Mr. Stewart called to the young lady to keep her seat, at all hazards, and to refrain from screaming. At the same moment he dashed forward with the speed of the wind, as the buggy horse, thoroughly frightened, broke into a gallop, the speed of which increased with every bound. The young man saw in a moment that Miss Seymour understood his caution, and had the nerve to act upon it. She placed herself in the middle of the seat, grasped its slender rim on each side, and braced her feet against the foot-rest. But his heart sank within him as he thought of the rough and narrow causeway, across a slough, only two hundred yards ahead. He knew that the slender wheels would be crushed instantly by such violent contact with the rough logs with which the causeway was paved, and that the only hope of saving the young lady from serious injury, with the chances much in favor of a violent death, lay in his ability to overtake the horse, seize him by the bridle, and turn him into a road which lead out of the main one,

just at the margin of the slough. All of this passed through his mind in an instant, as he swept, like a bird on the wing, past the old gentleman, who was sitting where he fell, with his hands covering his face. As great as was his speed the frightened horse had approached to within thirty yards of the branch road before he passed to his head and seized him by the bit. A succession of quick, vigorous jerks slackened the speed of the animal, but when the attempt was made to turn him into the side road, the momentum, coupled with the horse's resistance, could not be overcome in so short a space, and in an instant both horses and riders were dashed violently against the fence, in the angle made by the two roads. Mr. Stewart's horse made a gallant effort to leap the obstruction, and though he went over by knocking off some rails and breaking others, he landed on his side and rolled entirely over; but, fortunately, the young man had managed to clear himself of the saddle, and to fall a few feet away. In an instant he was on his feet, and springing over the fence again, he went to the assistance of the young lady. The buggy horse had crushed his way half through the fence, just at the angle, and lay struggling in death. The lady had been thrown clear of the fence, and was lying, apparently lifeless, a few feet from the wrecked remains of the buggy.

Mr. Stewart's heart grew still and pulseless as he knelt by the loved form, and, tenderly raising the beautiful head, rested it on his bosom. In a voice that trembled with agony, he exclaimed, scarcely above a whisper :

“Miss Seymour! Florence! Darling, *darling*, will you not speak to me? Will you never speak to me again? Oh, my God, have pity!”

As if in answer to the agonized prayer, the silken lashes,

upon which he was gazing so intently, trembled for a few moments, and then the beautiful blue eyes opened to an unusual width. The pupils were painfully dilated, and a look which betokened no recognition was fixed upon his face. As he unconsciously stroked the golden hair, he gazed, almost breathlessly, into those vacant eyes until the light of intelligence stole back into them by slow degrees, and a faint flush on the cheeks told him that he was recognized. Then, pressing his lips tenderly upon her forehead, he said, in a low voice :

“Speak to me, my darling, my own, and tell me that you are not seriously hurt !”

“N—no; I—hope not,” said the young lady, faintly.

“Have you any severe pain, my precious love?” asked the young man, anxiously.

“No ;—not—very.”

“Do you think you could sit alone?” he asked, pressing her head against his bosom.

“Perhaps—if—you desire—me to.”

“Desire it! my poor, precious, darling? No; not now!” exclaimed the young man, as he pressed her head still more closely to his bosom. “If the pure and boundless love of an honest heart can give me the right, I have a right to pillow your head upon my bosom, and to sustain and soothe you, not only during these moments of suffering, but while time with us shall last.”

“While time with us shall last!” repeated the young lady, closing her eyes, while a moisture glittered upon her lashes.

“Darling, is it a vow?” asked the young man, bowing his head, and speaking close to her ear.

“A vow,” she repeated, “unless——”

“Speak, darling, but make no conditions. It is a vow !”

“Yes; unless—I shall prove—to be maimed—for life.”

“In that case a doubly-sacred vow, my precious one!” exclaimed the young man, passionately, as he pressed warm kisses upon her lips. “Our hearts are bound by an indissoluble tie. The recording angel is registering our vow! Come weal or woe, we will be faithful and true, tender, loving and confiding, even unto death!”

“Even unto death!” repeated the young lady, placing her hand caressingly upon the arm which encircled her waist, and lying very still, while tears stole through her silken lashes, and chased each other in pearly drops down her cheeks.

At this moment, Fox, who had paused to ascertain if Dr. Hansel was seriously hurt, dashed up, and receiving a signal from Mr. Stewart, passed on at full speed to “The Oaks” to send a vehicle back for Miss Seymour, and to despatch a messenger for the physician.

As “The Oaks” was less than a mile distant, very few minutes elapsed before a light phaeton, drawn by a pair of quiet-looking bays, and bearing Marienne with sundry bottles of restoratives, *et cetera*, arrived. Dr. Hansel, who was considerably shaken up by his fall, had come up in the meantime, and was disconsolately lying against a corner of the fence, with one elbow resting upon the ground, while he scowled ominously at the interesting tableau presented on the opposite side of the road.

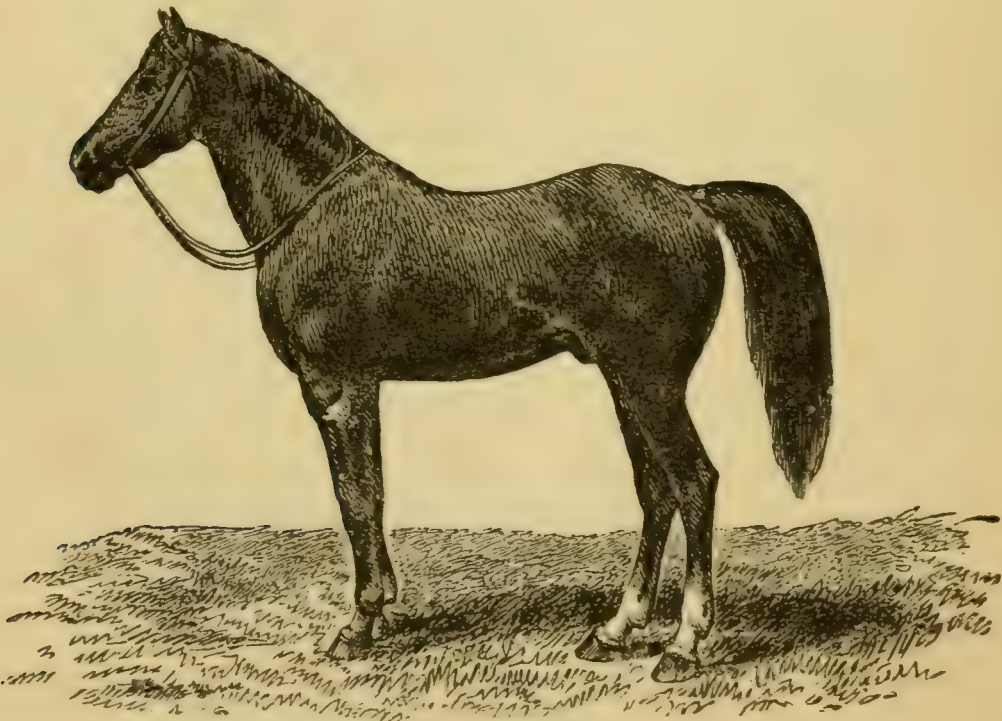
As Marienne knelt by the side of the young lady, who had not moved or spoken since Fox’s departure, but had continued to lie, like a sleeping child, upon Mr. Stewart’s bosom, the soft touch of her hand, moistened with some aromatic liquid, seemed to recall her wandering consciousness. She opened her eyes, and, after looking steadily

at the new-comer for a moment, said, with a smile, as she took hold of Marienne's hand :

" Ah ! you are Marienne ! We shall be friends ! You are, indeed, very beautiful ! "

" Poor child ! " said Marienne, kissing her on the forehead, and bathing her face with the contents of a bottle ; " her mind wanders. Monsieur," she added to Mr. Stewart, " let us take her home at once. Cesare went himself for the physician, and he will meet us there very soon. "

Dr. Hansel, who had now fully recovered the use of his mental faculties, which had seemed to be completely overwhelmed by the fearful accident, protested earnestly against taking Miss Seymour to any place but the Athenæum. But the young man, with Marienne's assistance, placed her in the vehicle, where she sat supported by the latter, while he took the reins and drove slowly to " The Oaks. " The old gentleman, having failed to carry his point, sat by the young man's side in sullen silence, while Dick went to look after Selim.



" Selim. "

CHAPTER XI.

A LOST CLAN.

*"Deserted is his own good hall;
Its hearth is desolate."*—BYRON.

*"It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea."*—EDGAR A. POE.

AS soon as Miss Seymour had been made comfortable by Marienne's and Mammy's good offices in a room on the first floor at "The Oaks" and the phaeton had been sent off to Barrensville for Mrs. Hansel, Dr. McDonald, the physician of the neighborhood, arrived, and was immediately conducted by Dr. Hansel to the young lady's room.

Half an hour later he made his appearance in the parlor, and relieved Mr. Stewart's anxiety by assuring him that the patient was not seriously hurt, and that nervous prostration, which would prevent her being removed for some days, was the only bad result of the accident which he anticipated.

Mrs. Hansel arrived before ten o'clock, and the good old doctor, having ordered the house to be kept quiet during the night, took his departure.

He was late in making his morning visit, as good old doctors usually are, and after having been in the patient's room for some time, he came out and informed Mr. Stewart that she was doing well, and that he had prescribed absolute rest of body and mind, but that, while she must not converse, he wished her to be entertained.

“I shall send you in there to read to her, young man, eh?” he added, familiarly shaking him by the shoulder; “I know you are dying to get in there, and I mean that you shall. The young lady needs no more physic, and I shall turn my attention to you. See? We old sawbones can ‘minister to a mind diseased’ as well as to an ailing body; yes, indeed! The treatment’s a little different, though; fact, I assure you! We run Homœopathy on the first; *similia similibus, et cetera*—especially the ‘*bus*,’ when that’s attainable. May aggravate the symptoms at first, but is sure to cool the fever in good time. Never knew it to fail; fact! Hope you’ll try it! Not bad to take, and don’t need anything to take the taste out of your mouth. See? Ha!”

The young man bore the humorous banter of the kind old gentleman pleasantly, and was rewarded by being installed as “assistant entertainer” to the patient, with the parting injunction to see about procuring “that anti-febrile lotion” for himself.

“No,” said Miss Seymour, as the “assistant entertainer” picked up “Tupper’s Proverbial Philosophy,” and commenced turning the leaves, that he might find and read that portion which speaks of seventh-heaven glances, whirlwind sighs, and millennial moments, “I know that book almost by heart, and I am old-fashioned enough to admire it very much, but I——

“My child!” said Mrs. Hansel, warningly.

“Yes; I know, mamma, the good old doctor said I was not to talk, and said many other saucy things, but where is the good of being a patient if one may not be wilful. I shall insist upon the usual resort to mingled bribery and coercion unless Mr. Stewart will agree to give us the legend of the Cocletz Indian tribe.”

“In that case,” said the young man, laughing, “I shall invoke the god Harpocrates to cast his spell upon you, and will commence the legend at once :

“The Cocletz Indians were not a tribe, but only a clan, whose ancestors belonged to the Catawba tribe. The name was originally only the name of an individual belonging to the clan. It was, and is, I believe, a custom with the ‘wild Indians,’ as those are called who have failed to adopt any of the methods or customs of civilization, except the use of rum and gunpowder, to name their children after the first object that attracts the young savage’s attention. This particular savage was named for the wolves. ‘Co-Cletz,’ in the Catawba language, means ‘wolves,’ or a flock or pack of wolves.

“The Catawbas, who had their headquarters on the Catawba river, in South Carolina, are said to have been a superior tribe of Indians. Like the majority of other Southern tribes, notably the Muscogulges, Cherokees, Seminoles, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Susquehannoughs, and others, they were proud, haughty, brave and valiant in war, yet magnanimous and merciful to a vanquished enemy.

“It was the custom of the Catawbas to make long trips Northward in the summer season, and in these hunting journeys they went as far North as the Valley of Virginia very frequently, where they would exchange their mussel-shell spoons, and agate arrow-heads, for the oyster-shell cutting implements of the Senedos and Tuscaroras.

“In one of these excursions they met and fought the Massawomees, a powerful and very cruel and barbarous tribe from the North, which had become a terror to the more peaceful tribes of Eastern Virginia. At the time of the collision a few of the braves, accompanied by their

squaws, had gone with a party of Senedos on a fishing excursion to the Eastern Shore. When these returned to the North fork of the Shenandoah, the home of the Senedos, they found that the portion of the Senedo tribe which had remained behind in their village had been massacred by the Massawomees, and that the visiting Catawbas had been routed and driven, with much slaughter, westward across the mountains. The little band of Catawbas attempted to follow their tribe, but, unfortunately, they fell in with the Massawomees, and those that were not slaughtered were made prisoners and slaves. Several years elapsed before, on another expedition against the tribes of Eastern Virginia, the few Catawbas still alive in bondage had an opportunity to escape from their cruel captors. There were now only about half a dozen of them, and they fled southward along the foot hills that lie at the eastern base of the Blue Ridge mountains, until they came to the land of the Chicoras. Here they were permitted to remain for a time, but a difficulty having arisen with members of that tribe, they were again forced to resume their tramp. After many weeks of weary, weary travel, they came to the land of the Uchees, a small tribe then holding a small territory, embracing the beautiful country and romantic scenery lying between the head waters of the Savannah and those of the Alabama rivers. The wanderers were made welcome by the Uchees, on account of the little numerical strength which they brought, and accepted a proposition to ally themselves permanently with that tribe.

“It was a short time after their adoption by the Uchees that the boy Co-Cletz was born. When he arrived at the age of manhood, his great intelligence, coupled with his great daring and skill in all manly exercises, and his won-

derful fleetness of foot and great powers of endurance, made him a very popular and prominent member of the tribe. But, unfortunately, he fell in love with the only daughter of the chief, who had been betrothed, by her father, to a prince of a neighboring tribe, and the gentle savage returned his passion.

“Love, it is said, causes a large part of the sum of human misery, whether among Christian barbarians or barbarous heathens, but as it makes the sum total of human happiness in this life, all people, in all ages, bow submissively to its gentle dictates. The old Uchee chief, however, was not disposed to bow meekly to the inevitable. When the two lovers attempted to elope to the Indian’s Gretna Green—the uninhabited wilds of the forest—they were captured, and the maiden was put under a strong guard, while preparations were made to cremate the dashing and too fascinating young brave in the usual aboriginal fashion. This would undoubtedly have been done, despite the angry scowls and muttered threats of the young man’s clan and relatives, had not the maiden been a heroine. Springing from her guards, with a butcher knife snatched from one of them, she ran forward and sprang to the side of her lover, on the pile of pine-knot faggots, which was already ablaze, and avowed her determination to die with him, and to stab to the heart any one who should attempt to prevent the execution of her design. Of course, there was a general rush, on the part of all present, to extinguish the fire, and in the confusion the little heroine cut the thongs which bound her manly lover, and he bounded, like a deer, into the depths of the forest.

“The young man was never seen by the tribe again, and the vindictive old chief vented his spleen upon the rebel-

lions relatives and clan, till, one by one, they disappeared from the camp, and finally not one was left.

“The time was rapidly approaching for the young chief to claim his bride, when, on a dark, moonless, mid-summer night, the ominous and persistent hooting of an owl was heard near the camp, which the still imprisoned and guarded maiden amused herself by attempting to imitate. Suddenly there was a rush of dusky forms upon the wigwam prison, the guards were clubbed and the maiden spirited away. The war whoop was sounded, clubs were seized and pursuit made, but neither the maiden nor her captors were ever seen again by the old Uchee or his people.

“Young Co-Cletz, having thus obtained possession of his heroic bride, journeyed westward beyond the Alabama river, and for many years he and his little band were a nomadic clan, smoking the pipe of peace with all tribes, but affiliating with none. Becoming friendly with the white people of Alabama, they adopted some of the habits and customs of civilization, and eventually located permanently in North Alabama. By some means, in the early days of territorial government, they obtained a title to ten or more sections of land, lying chiefly in the Barrens, and within four or five miles of this place. They cultivated patches of corn and potatoes, with an occasional patch of cotton, and traded venison and furs with the white people, to whom they were known as the Cocletz clan.

“When the Indians were removed from Alabama they refused to go, and as they were orderly and peaceful, and owned in fee a part of the soil, no objection was made to their remaining. The location of their settlement was an unhealthy one, there being an extensive swamp near by, and to the southward of it, and this, coupled perhaps with

the radical change in their mode of life, caused the clan to decrease in numbers. Occasionally, too, some of them would go off, and never return, and it was taken for granted, of course, that they had gone to the Indian Territory.

“This continued, until they were reduced to three families, with a great-grandson of the original Cocletz as chief. This man, old Clopton Cocletz, as he was called—having been named Clopton after a white man, who, as surveyor, land commissioner, or something of the kind, had befriended the tribe—was a boisterous, drinking fellow. Nothing greatly to his discredit was known, but he was cordially hated by the other two families. These, also, finally disappeared, and, no doubt, went to the Indian Territory, as they bought a wagon from a white man, and spoke of their intention to remove there. Their departure left Clopton Cocletz, and his wife and three boys, sole proprietors of a good, large territory of land. Some of the best of this was sold, and the proceeds invested in negro slaves, thus enabling the old Indian to become quite a large cotton planter.

“About the time that his youngest boy was fully grown, the wife died, and, it was said, the old man then became very dissipated and reckless, and that he and the boys often engaged in some of the wildest revelry ever known in a civilized land. Of course, his exploits were greatly exaggerated by the negroes, and as neighboring planters forbade their negroes to hold any communication with those on his place, he soon became an object of superstition, and finally of terror, to the imaginative creatures. In his early life he had lost an eye, and when he became an object of superstitious fear, the young wits, playing upon the abbreviation of his name, Clop. Cocletz, styled

him ‘Cyclops Cocletz,’ and would tell marvellous tales of impossible exploits by him for the mere pleasure of testing the credulity of some superstitious son or daughter of Ham.

“In the course of time, it was whispered around among the colored people that he and the boys had murdered one of their slaves in a drunken broil, and had threatened to massacre all on the plantation if the fact should ever be divulged. Of course, when this got noised abroad, the sheriff and people went there to investigate the matter.

“The wild revellers were not found at home, and their negroes stated that they went out fox-hunting, before day-dawn, three days previously, and had not returned; nor had a horse or a hound returned or been heard of.

“To make a long story short, they were never heard of again. Of course, there could be but one opinion as to what had become of them; and the forests were searched for miles around, and the accessible portions of the swamp were explored, all to no purpose. The family and relatives of the murdered negro were arrested, and all the others were held as witnesses, but the most skillful examination failed to elicit more than the simple tale which was first told.

“The proper court appointed a receiver to take charge of the property until, by advertising in the Indian Territory, lawful heirs should be found. But all of the advertising failed to produce a claimant, and the real property was finally escheated to the state, and the slaves were sent to Ohio and liberated, a small tract of land having been purchased for their use and benefit.

“The negroes soon got into trouble in Ohio, and a mob of citizens killed several of them and drove the balance

from their neighborhood. The news of these troubles came back here greatly exaggerated, and the negroes attributed all to the malignant influence of old Cyclops Cocletz and the boys.*

“All these occurrences gave a wide field for the exercise of lively imaginations, and the negroes soon came to believe that the Prince of Evil kidnapped old Cyclops Cocletz and his boys, as well as their horses and hounds, and had appointed them his emissaries to look after his interests in this country generally.

“According to veracious negro authority there is not a night, from the first to the third quarter of the moon, that the sound of the horn and the yelp of the hounds of old Cyclops and the boys, may not be heard in some dark and dismal forest; while occasionally one or more of them may be seen to flit across an open field, with their phantom steeds at full speed, in mad chase after the shadow of a passing cloud.

“In closing this true history, I must remark that Peter Dillard is the first person, of whom I have heard, who has ever been honored by a visit from all the clan with all

* It is a rather remarkable fact that, for many years previous to the war, no little colony of liberated slaves, from the South, was permitted to live in peace in any Northern state; and it was generally the case that their introduction was resisted by mob violence. This became so bad, just previous to the war, that when slaves were liberated by the wills of deceased persons, with the usual provision for their settlement in a free estate, the only safe and sure course to insure for the poor creature a welcome, or even toleration, was to take him near the state line, put his legacy into his pocket, make him play the trick of “*absconding*” and then offer a *small* reward for him as a runaway slave. This trick always operated as an “open sesame” upon the hearts and homes of the “philanthropists,” and was a cruel, practical joke upon them, which, the writer is assured, was often played; particularly upon those of Ohio.

their horses and hounds. As they never condescend to lay their spectre hands upon mortal materiality, except in cases of very peculiar interest to the immaterial world, I fear that Peter has been guilty of some terrible offense against the peace and dignity of the spirit land !”

As the young man, in imitation of the heathen deity, whose aid he had invoked in Miss Seymour’s behalf, laid the forefinger of his right hand upon his lips, the young lady raised her eyes to his with a pleased and gratified expression, which changed instantly to one of merry rebelliousness as she noted the pantomimic gesture. But before she could speak, Dr. Hansel, who could never resist the temptation offered by a good opportunity to give the institution of slavery a “stab under the fifth rib,” remarked :

“The legend is quite interesting, sir ; but the gross superstition shows a shameful depth of ignorance and degradation for which, you must admit, the institution of slavery is responsible.”

“I can make no such admission, doctor,” said the young man, pleasantly ; “nor can I agree that even gross superstition is an evidence of degradation. The communities, which, in time past, put supposed witches to death by hanging or burning are not supposed or considered to have been a particularly degraded people.”

“The cases are quite different, sir,” said the old gentleman, stiffly. “The New England superstition was two hundred years ago.”

“Yes ; at a time when the ancestors of these negroes were untamed savages in the wilds of Africa. The only difference I can see is in favor of the negroes. Their civilization is of recent origin, and is not an indigenous growth, and they are hardly more highly civilized now

than the Pilgrim Fathers were then. Yet you cannot find anywhere in the South a large community of negroes who would sanction or permit the cool and deliberate taking of human life for any smaller offense than murder or a worse crime.”

“But the superstition in New England was confined to only a few,” exclaimed the old gentleman, “and was soon put aside, even by those few.”

“Your poet, John G. Whittier, says that those superstitions have not been put entirely aside, even to the present day. As to the ‘few’ of whom you speak, they were the leading men, the teachers of the Puritan portion of the people; and we can hardly suppose the flocks to have been greatly superior to the shepherds. Whittier describes the latter as considering themselves ‘the champions of God’s chosen people,’ who girded up their stout loins to do battle with the unmeasured, all-surrounding terror—the spirit of the bad angel which caused the meeting-houses to be burned by lightning; which, speaking through the lips of Madam Hutchinson, confuted the ‘Judges of Israel,’ and made ashamed the ‘godly ministers of Zion;’ and which put it into the hearts of the Indians, red devils, to love the pestilent Quakers and the Jesuit missionaries—locusts from the bottomless pit—and to seek the scalps of ‘God’s anointed.’”

“You are quite facetious, sir,” said the old man, haughtily; then, seeing an amused smile on the young lady’s lips, he added, sarcastically, “Miss Seymour, I see no wit in Mr. Stewart’s remark!”

“The wit, if there be any, doctor,” said the young man, with a laugh, “is not mine. I have given you, from memory, a verbatim extract from a magazine article by your pleasant poet, John G. Whittier. But we will change

the subject. I wish to inform Miss Seymour that my little cousins and their father will dine with us to-day. They and other neighbors would have been over sooner but for the physician's orders."

"Oh, that was cruel," said the young lady, with animation, arising to a sitting posture upon the sofa, "to forbid my little friends ——"

"I only wish to say in this connection," interrupted the old gentlemen, and speaking as if passing sentence upon a malefactor, "that if John G. Whittier is alleged to be a poet, he cannot prove his right to be considered a man of common sense or common decency; and it can never be alleged that he has common respect for the Christian sages of the past!"

"Perhaps," said the young man, by way of apology for Mr. Whittier, "his ancestors belonged to the persecuted Quakers, and not to the persecuting Puritans."

Miss Seymour smiled at this remark, and the old man left the room abruptly.



Pure as the Lily.

CHAPTER XII.

TADPOLES AND WATER-SQUARAPINS.

*"Sorrow for past ills doth restore frail man
To his first innocence."*—NABB'S MICROCOSMUS.

*"Who by repentance is not satisfied
Is not of heaven or earth."*—SHAKSPEARE.

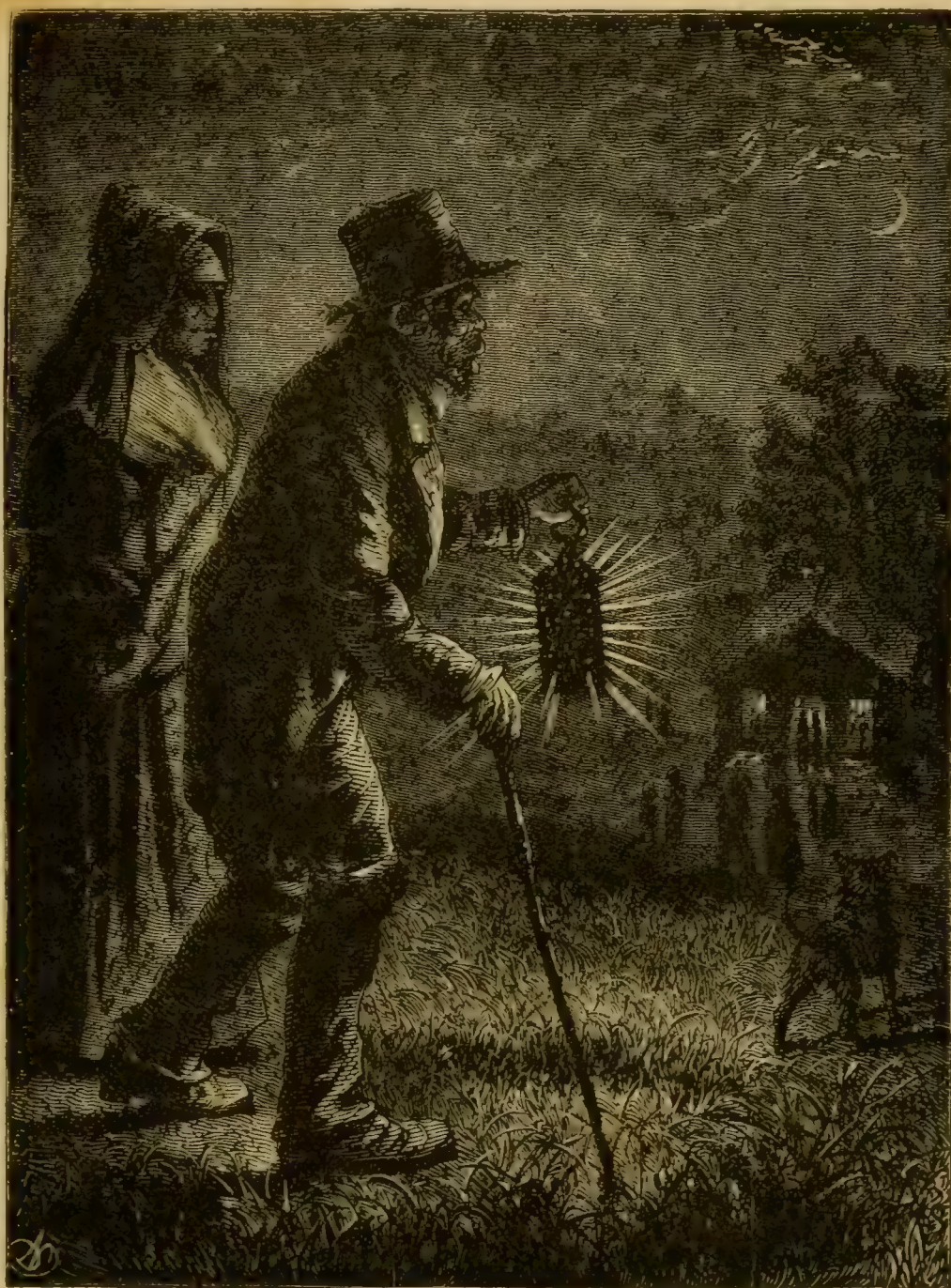
ON the day succeeding Peter Dillard's capture, as it was the fifth Sunday, there was no appointment for services at Bethel, in the forenoon. In the afternoon it had been announced the Rev. Mr. Elliott, the regular preacher, would deliver a sermon on the joys of Paradise. Long before the appointed hour arrived the negroes in the country around had been made aware that Peter Dillard had mysteriously disappeared, and that his family had no idea of his whereabouts or what was detaining him. The idea that he had absconded was scouted by all, but mysterious insinuations were thrown out by some, until, by three o'clock, the whole neighborhood was in a state of the greatest suspense and excitement, and rumors of the most contradictory and impossible character were flying from plantation to plantation on the wings of the wind.

As Peter was a very prominent member of the church, it was hoped by all that at the church they might hear the truth of the matter; and when good old Brother Elliott appeared on his flea-bitten gray he was astonished to find the immense crowd awaiting his ministrations, until he

recollected having heard of Dillard's mysterious disappearance, and the superstitious surmises respecting it. He immediately resolved to rebuke this gross superstition, on so favorable an occasion as he then had ; yet as he was not a "fashionable preacher," with a princely salary, he could not make an address strictly upon superstition, but must hang his remarks on that subject upon a framework of gospel forms and truths.

Before the congregation repaired to the commodious, but rigidly-plain building, the various rumors had consolidated themselves into one of the most startling character possible. That Peter and some friends while crossing a field had been swooped down upon by the whole Cocletz clan, and carried off through the air, leaving a streak of blue light behind them ! How this account originated, or who had brought it to the church could not be ascertained ; but this fact only served to secure for it unquestioning credence, and dull eyes became alert, while bright eyes grew wild and sleek black faces grew ashy with horror, as the tale was whispered from ear to ear.

Before the sermon was half ended, it was evident to the good old parson that while he spoke of the "spirits of just men made perfect" the thoughts of his congregation were running upon spirits that had not been made perfect, but were permitted to vex this mundane sphere. In vain did he paint the beauties of the Celestial City, and speak of the felicity of the just. The minds of his hearers were preoccupied, and their restless eyes ever ready to leap from a listless contemplation of his features to a startled flash upon the windows, if but the shadow of a bird flitted across the latter. Uncle George and Aunt Prudence, Br'er Remus and Sis' Dolly, and other *patres* and *matres*-



"Seeking More Light."

familiarum forgot to make their usual impromptu responses from that portion of the building which the irreverent young bucks styled the “amen corner,” and a weird stillness seemed to brood over the congregation. Finally, after the declining sun had thrown the deep shade of the oaks hard by around the old building, the faithful laborer closed his remarks; and, after a devout prayer, asked his people to sing a favorite hymn by Wesley, beginning:

“Away, my unbelieving fear!”

An ambitious young man who had often longed for an opportunity to distinguish himself by leading the singing, in place of Peter Dillard, the regular leader, saw now his opportunity, and raised his voice in a lusty attempt to enshroud that pleasant composition in the doleful metre of “Hark, from the tomb!” Bravely did he perform remarkable feats of vocal agility in the vain effort to make the scant robe of common metre cover the full proportions of iambic tetrametre, till one by one his backers deserted him; and, overcome by the mortification of failure, he was about to sink into his seat, when the door in the shadowy gable end was pushed violently open, and a clear, full, strong voice sang out, with proper tune and pitch,

“Away, my unbelieving fear!”

Ah! that voice! Who was there present that did not know the deep baritone of Peter Dillard’s powerful voice? All heads were instantly jerked around to the rear, and as the new-comer’s bloodshot eyes and swollen features grew on the intent gazers from the shadows surrounding the singer, there was a feeling that something connected with the supernatural was before them, and strong men

groaned, women shrieked and little darkies crawled under the benches. But all undaunted by the commotion around, the strong singer gave a stentorian and not unmusical rendition of the hymn to the end. Brother Elliott, seeing that his congregation were hardly convinced of the materiality of the new-comer, asked him to pray, and as he lifted his resonant voice in a rudely eloquent rhapsody of thanksgiving for his delivery from the clutches of the evil one and the spirits of the damned who do his bidding on earth, strong lungs vociferated earnest responses, and impressionable females gave way to an ecstasy of devotional feeling and shouted aloud.

As soon as the congregation was dismissed, men, women and children, feeling no longer a doubt of Peter's presence in the flesh, gathered around him to hear the history of his horrible adventure. The young men insisted that he should take the pulpit and "talk it out" where all could see him; but Peter refused to desecrate the sacred place, and declared that he should not have entered the building, even, until he had been rebaptized, for the evil one had had his foul claws upon him, and he had ridden upon a horse whose breath of life was the sulphurous gases of the infernal pit. It was finally determined that he should mount the "horse blocks;" and from that rude rostrum, sitting as did the savans of old, he gave a full and elaborate account of the events of the night as they had impressed themselves upon his mind, omitting, of course, any reference to the "Red String Gang" and its secret conclave, and closing with the remarks:

"And I tell you, folks, ef it hadn't bin for dat rooster crowin' you never would o' heard, har nor hide, o' Peter Dillard no more in dis worl' for ever an' ever, amen! I

had done sold my soul to de evil sperit, an' didn't know it. He didn't take me up on a mountain to temp' me—an' dat shows how smart he is—but he took me down in de creek bottom, an' told me to bow down an' woship him, an' I done it like a fool! I has bin desput wicked, an' its a speshul providence dat snatched me, es I mout say, out o' de very jaws o' hell! I has bin a Judas 'Scariot, an' ef de one I has betrayed says, 'Yes, Peter, you has betrayed your principles, an' your 'ligion an' every thing,' I's gwine to—well, you all know what Judas 'Scariot done? Don't ax me no queshtons; don't talk; I's in de hans o' de good Lawd; His blessed will be done.

A couple of hours later, as the Widow Dillard was sitting in conversation with her two little daughters, a servant came in and said:

“Ole Miss', Uncle Peter is at de back do', an' says he wants to see you.”

“What does he want, Sue?” inquired the old lady.

“Don't know'm. He looks monstous flustered.”

“Well, get a light and take him into the dining-room. I'm afraid to stand in the draft of night air.”

“Well, Peter,” said the old lady, entering the dining-room and acknowledging the negro's profoundly respectful bow, “how is Aunt Hannah this evening and what can I do for you?”*

* It was universally the custom, in the days of slavery in the South, for all old negroes to be called “uncle” or “aunt” by their juniors, whether white or black; and the continuance of this custom for a time after “freedom come roun'” caused many a lady to be grossly insulted by some former friend of color who had imbibed at the fount erected by the “messengers of a matchless benevolence,” where they kept their peculiar brand of philanthropy always “on tap.” This custom is not yet entirely abolished among the best people, but it is practiced only toward the better class of negroes.

"Mammy's a heap better, thank'ee, marm. Dat kolly-gog is done quench de fever for good, I b'lieve. But I wants to talk 'bout myself, mistis."

"Well, what is it?"

"Trubble, marm! Trubble!"

"In consequence of your spree, I suppose. Peter, I am astonished and mortified beyond expression at your conduct!"

"Mistis, dat wan't no spree! I has never been drunk in my life; I wish it was a spree, but it's a heap wus dan dat!"

"What can be worse than that?"

"Oh! mistis, a heap o' things; a heap o' things! Mistis, didn't your ma raise my mammy an' daddy?"

"Yes."

"An' was dey lyin', 'ceitful niggers?"

"No, indeed!"

"An' neither is I-a-lyin', 'ceitful nigger; but, mistis, I's a heap wus dan dat!"

"What on earth do you mean, Peter?"

"Didn't I promise ole marster, when he was layin' in tother room dar on his dyin' bed, dat I'd be a good nigger, like my daddy befo' me, an' take keer o' you an' de young mistises?"

"Yes; and you have kept your promise faithfully, Peter," said the old lady, warmly, as she saw greater evidence of deeply disturbed feeling.

"Has I, mistis? I has made good craps, tuck keer o' de stock, an' kept up de fences?"

"Yes, you have."

"I has kep' down all rowdyin' an' fussin' on de plantation, had de wood hauled, de hogs an' beeffer fed, de meat cured an' tuck keer on; has 'tended to things

ginerally, an' has bin 'beejint an' 'spectful to you an' de young mistises?”

“Yes; all that and more, Peter.”

“Yes'm; all dat an' more—all dat an' more! I has bin a *Judas 'Scariot!*”

“Why, Peter,” exclaimed the old lady, as tears of sympathy with the negro's deep emotion rose to her eyes. “You shock me! Whom have you betrayed?”

“I has betrayed de ole mammy dat fetched me into de world, mistis,” exclaimed the negro, no longer able to conceal the tears that would flow. “I has betrayed my honest principles; I has betrayed de ole marster dats sleepin' in his grave; I has betrayed his little chil'en dat I promised to perteck; I has betrayed you dat has never gin me a cross word, dat has sot by my bed, day arter day, wid my ole mammy when I was at death's do' an' past all help 'cept dat o' de prars o' de righteous. Dat's who I has betrayed!” and the strong man, overcome by emotion, and unable to stand longer, knelt by the window and bowed his head upon the sill while throes of emotion, to which he restrained all audible sign, shook his massive frame.

“There, Peter,” said the old lady, soothingly, while tears of sympathy stood in her eyes, “take the chair by your side and compose yourself. I am sure you have not done anything so very bad. We are all liable to err. None of God's creatures can be perfect in this life.”

“Yes, mistis,” replied the negro, reaching out and drawing the chair under himself and looking out at the window, as he brushed his sleeve across his eyes in an angry wipe at his tears; “we is all lierble to err, an' I s'pose we is all lierble to be tempted by de spirit o' evil;

an' dat's what I hes bin. De evil one took de blessed Saviour up on de mountain an' tole him to fall down an' woship him an' he'd give Him all de worl'. But He knowed—bless His holy name—dat it was de evil one ; an' 'sides dat, de worl', an' de heavens, an' all, was His'n, anyhow. But dat same evil one, in de form of a gent'man, took me down in de creek bottom, an ——"

"Ah ! Peter," interrupted the old lady, "that was all a strange hallucination."

"I don't mean dem Coclutch sperits, mistis ; but dem wa'n't no' lucination, nor nothin' like dat ; I means de rale evil one. He come to me drest up like white fokes, an' took me down in de creek bottom an' tole me to fall down an' woship strange gods, *an' I done it*, des as anybody might o' knowed a fool nigger would do. An' I kept on a woshupin', an' I felt meaner'n a sheep-killin' dog an' fiercer dan a roarin' lion seekin' whom he may devour somebody. I felt like a ragin' wolf, ready to jump in de sheepfold an' devour up de lams ! An' dat's what I was, —a wolf in sheep's clothing 'till de good Lawd sent dem Coclutch spirits—es mean as dey is—to 'rest dat evil one an' snatch me out o' de jaws o' de pit. An' dey done it, too, like a flash o' lightnin' an' I seed 'em flyin' off wid 'im, cussin' an' screechin' throo de a'r like a ——"

"Stop, Peter," said the old lady, gravely, "you are a leading and respected member of the church, besides being the manager of this place, and what you say has great weight with the colored people. For this latter reason, if for no other, you should be very particular to distinguish between what you 'see in a vision' and what you see with your natural eyes."

The old lady, continuing, read the poor negro quite a homily on religious duties and superstitious beliefs, ending

with the remark, “Sue has told me of your adventure, and I do not care to have a repetition of it. It was a strange hallucination, and the most natural inference is that you were intoxicated. But as that was not the case, we are bound to suppose it to have been a dream—only a dream in any event, and let me request you, Peter, in future keep your dreams to yourself, and don’t tell them and magnify them as real occurrences.”

“Ah! mistis,” said the negro, solemnly, “dem wa’n’t no dreams, ’cept dat my own min’ was took out o’ me an’ de spirit o’ de evil one was put into me. Ef dem was dreams, den Peter Dillard is a loonytick nigger! But, mistis, I want to tell you somethin’ dat nobody but me has ever diskivered,—an’ it’s dis :—*Niggers’ min’s ain’t like white folkes’ min’s!* White folkes min’s is like de steam boats on de Tenness’y river—dey knows what dey is up to an’ goes right straight along no matter which way de water flows or de win’ blows. Niggers’ min’s is like de water *in* de river—sloshin’ along in a sort o’ happy-go-lucky, Christmus-all-de-year-roun’ fashion, an’ ef some rascal goes dar an’ digs a hole in de bank it’s boun’ to soak in dar an’ go to breedin’ tadpoles an’ water-squarapins. But I won’t argufy de pint ’bout de dream business, mistis, es you don’t want me to. All I wants is fer you to have confidence in me like you use’ to.”

“I know no cause why my confidence in you should be shaken, Peter, and I feel confident that nothing likely to occur can shake it.”

“Thank ’ee for dem good words, mistis,” said the negro, earnestly; “an’ now I wants to make all dem promises over again dat I made to ole marster, an’ I wants you to git de blessed Book an’ make me swear to ’em.”

“I am not qualified to administer an oath, Peter” said

the old lady, smiling," and besides the word of an honest man, like yourself, is as good as his oath."

"Thank 'ee, mistis; thank 'ee; but I'd a heap ruther take my Bible oath. You has a heap mo' confidence in me dan I has in myself, since I has done foun' myself out. Howsomever, I's gwine to keep dem promises, an ef I don't," he added, solemnly, putting his hand upon his broad chest and looking upward, "may de good Lawd strike me dead in my tracks de minnit I break 'em! Dar, dat's a oath, mistis! Has you any orders, marm, to give?"

"No. Tell Aunt Hannah the doctor will be here to-morrow, and I shall come down with him."

"Thank 'ee, mistis. Sarvant, marm!" and with this characteristic adieu of the genteel colored man, accompanied by a profound bow, the negro made his exit from the presence of the old mistress whose house, only twenty-four hours previously, he had believed he was willing to see fired over her head; not because of any want of love and respect for the inmates, toward whom he had never entertained one feeling of resentment or unkindness, but because he had been made, under the influence of a malignant and superior intelligence, to believe that the mastery of the white people over the African was the one great obstacle in the way of the advent of a social millennium, in which there would be no more care, worry and toil, no more sin, sorrow and suffering forever.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

*"Love is a passion
Which kindles honor into noble acts."*—DRYDEN'S RIVAL LADIES.

*"I do love thee, and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again."*—SHAKSPEARE'S OTHELLO.

WHEN the Misses Anderson, accompanied by their father, arrived at "The Oaks," the former immediately evinced a determination to "make things lively," as they expressed it. They assisted Marienne in the usual "company day" floral decorations of the dinner table, making some gorgeous and startling combinations; ransacked the house, from basement to garret, turned things around generally and rallied Miss Seymour, after all were seated at table, on looking so "pale and interesting," and being so used up by a very tame and unromantic personation of "Sol's carriage driver." Then, turning their batteries on their cousin, they abused him roundly for playing the role of Jupiter to Miss Seymour's Phaeton, instead of stopping the horse and helping her out gracefully, like a sensible fellow; declared that he did it on purpose, well knowing there was no other method by which he could get Miss Seymour, or any other sensible, and consequently bachelor-hating, young lady, into his den, excepting his charitable cousins, who, out of pure compassion, made it a rule to look after him occasionally, and wound up by advising Mrs. Hansel to keep her eyes on "Cousin

Charles," for they more than half suspected that this little escapade was the first act in the drama of "The Spider and the Fly."

Miss Seymour laughed and blushed at their merry raillery; "Cousin Charles" declared that he was entirely given over, "horse, foot and dragoons," to cruel massacre, because that gallant fellow, Flournoy, was not here to silence the batteries of the enemy. Mrs. Hansel grew nervous and pale, while Dr. Hansel looked as solemn and woe-begone as if he had just read one of Greely's leaders on the subject of slavery.

"Charlie," said Major Anderson, laughing at the merry mood of his daughters, "these little misses are envious because they are only school-girls, and stand no chance to be invited into the spider parlor."

"Thank you, uncle," laughed the young man, "for coming to my rescue. That is exactly the weak point on which Flournoy would have opened his battery had he been there. By the bye, Miss Clare, you didn't win the bet yesterday."

"Well, if I didn't," replied the young lady, "it was only because I had the curiosity to observe with what degree of fortitude Miss Florence would submit to the infliction which was so ingeniously imposed on her."

"A very likely story," laughed Mr. Stewart, slightly coloring, "but you admit that you lost the bet. I am glad to see," he added, glancing at her curls, "that he was a considerate savage, and did not take your entire scalp."

"Scalp, indeed!" replied the young lady, slightly blushing; "he only got a small part of one curl, and stole that with his penknife while I was plucking a water-lily."

“Oh, he got a curl, did he?” laughed Mr. Stewart. “How charmingly confiding you are of a secret which I am sure even Procrustean torture could not have extorted from Flournoy ! Now, Mrs. Hansel,” he added, turning to that lady, “I advise you to keep your eyes on a certain charming young lady pupil, or, the first thing you know, ‘a bold soldier boy’ will come tramping back here from the war, and she will be flinging herself out of the window at him.”

“Thank you,” said Miss Clare, “for the compliment which you pay to the dignity and sense of propriety of the ‘charming young lady pupils’ of the Atheneum ; and I promise in return that the next time you visit that institution, the only welcome you receive shall be ‘flung’ out of the window at you.”

“Which will be winged kisses, loving glances, or misses’ discarded buskins—which ?”

“Neither, sir, I assure you,” said the young lady, with great dignity ; “the latter might do, were it not the custom to throw them only at *successful* lovers. If we consider the fitness of things, a lady’s discarded mitten would be the proper article to throw. So you may look out, sir !” she added, as, being the last to finish her dinner, she threw an almond, and shook the nut-crackers at her tormentor.

“Uncle,” said Mr. Stewart, rising, and speaking with mock gravity, “each one of these young ladies has assaulted me a dozen times within the past hour, either by looks, pouts, or actual blows. Can even Spartan fortitude endure longer ?”

“No,” laughed the old gentleman, “enforce the law applicable in such cases.”

Before Mr. Stewart had been commissioned an officer

of the law, however, the young ladies had drawn Miss Seymour out into the hall, and had enlisted her in their cause, at least so far as to make her the proposer of a truce, which, as each offender occupied the neutral ground of one of her encircling arms, the young man was forced to accept.

Notwithstanding Dr. Hansel's sombre looks, which did not grow brighter after dinner, and which caused Miss Clare to suggest, in a stage whisper to her cousin, that perhaps it would be well to introduce "the day of final judgment" as a topic of conversation, the small remaining portion of the afternoon passed quickly and delightfully; and the shades of twilight had given way to bright starlight before the visitors arose to depart. The Misses Anderson, putting their arms affectionately around Miss Seymour, drew her out into the yard, in order to have a few final words at the carriage door; and Mr. Stewart, a few moments later, accompanied his uncle, and received from the little misses the parting "demure and decorous kisses," which, according to the terms of the after-dinner truce, were to be accepted in full payment of all pains and penalties incurred during the afternoon.

As the carriage whirled away, throwing from its polished wheels a twinkling reflection of the bright starlight, Mr. Stewart, drawing the young lady's hand through his arm, sauntered out into the grove.

It is, perhaps, excusable in all young people, no matter how practical they may be, when they find themselves for the first time under the full influence of the "grand passion," to indulge to some extent in lofty sentiment and stilted phraseology; and probably they often do so without being conscious of the fact. Such, perhaps, was the case with our lovers on this night, the beauty of which was

sufficient to inspire a young heart, even though untouched by love.

“Florence, darling,” said the young man, in low, tender tones, “see how brightly ‘the silent watchers of the night’ smile on us. Not a cloud, nor even an envious mist is there to dim the beauty and the glory of the mysterious ‘upper depths,’ where centres of systems float as mere luminous specks upon the face of the great macrocosm. May not we, my darling, accept the unobscured loveliness of this night, the first on which we have spoken alone to each other since the loves of our hearts have been fully revealed, as a bright harbinger of the life that is in store for us when, hand in hand, we shall begin life’s journey anew, resolved to cheer and sustain each other through whatever of good or ill may betide, and to make bright and pleasant each other’s pathway down into the ‘valley of the shadow’ that lies across our way to the realms of perfect bliss? See, my love, the radiant Venus, queen of love and beauty, but fit only to be your handmaiden, smiling sweetly upon us. Here, before her, and in the presence of this countless host of silent witnesses, shall we not renew our vows?”

“Yes,” replied Miss Seymour, with a sigh in her voice, “we will renew our vows; but we cannot forget the fact that as, at any moment, the fickle mists may obscure the brightness of the heavens from us, so may unpropitious fate overcast our future with the black clouds of despair. Oh, how serenely Venus smiles upon us! yet do we not know that the fiery Mars is but a little way beneath the horizon, and is only awaiting the fullness of time to climb up through the portals of night and scowl upon us with his cruel eye?”

“Yes; within an hour Mars will be peering at us

through the tree-tops ; and in a very short time the dread god of war, who is already ‘yoking his red dragons,’ will flame up in the political horizon of our unhappy land. The gleam of his red eye will not only flash in the faces of panoplied hosts, but will glare through the lattices of our weeping Southern homes. It is this last thought that has been the answer to my prayer, when I have asked that my great love for you may not warp my judgment respecting the sacred duty which I owe to my country. I must fight your kinsmen, in the effort to defend our homes from invasion ; or I must sink into a depth of degradation far below the reach of self-respect, to which death would be a thousand times preferable. Darling, must your heart remain neutral, while mine is being torn by a conflict so terrible ?”

“No,” replied the now weeping maiden, suffering her head to sink upon the bosom of her lover, “I have thought of the conflicting emotions that must agitate your noble bosom, and my heart has wept for you. Were the circumstances of the present troubles different, were your people about to invade the homes of my land, my heart would stand coldly aloof from the conflict going on in yours, and would judge you and deal with you according to the result. But it is your land that is about to be invaded, it matters not by whom ; it is the mothers, wives, and daughters of your land who are to bear the slow torture of a ceaseless and undefined terror gnawing at their hearts ; and, considering love for the land of one’s birth, and a willingness to die in its defence, as the noblest instinct of which the human heart is capable, my heart could not have enthroned you as its lord and king, and have enshrined your image and character as the idols of its worship, had it been possible that you could turn your back

on your mother-land in the hour of her deep distress and sore necessity.”

“Thank you, my noble, generous, darling!” exclaimed the young man, pressing the trembling form of the weeping maiden to his heart, and passionately kissing her passive lips. “The expression of that lofty sentiment was not needed to assure me that you are the purest, best, and most generous of the good Father’s created beings; but it dispels the clouds that have lowered around me, and gives blessed sunlight to all my surroundings. Before many days, I must be far away, but my heart will be ever present with you, and I feel that your love will give a protecting shield to my life on the field of strife, and that heaven will bring me back to you and happiness.”

“Ah! civil war is a terrible, terrible thing!” exclaimed the young lady, nestling her head yet closer to her lover’s bosom. “If you shall escape the perils of the battle-field, and if greatly superior numbers and resources shall, in the end, prevail, how will your proud spirit brook to see your country stripped of its property and prosperity, your homes desecrated and destroyed, and your people humiliated, persecuted and oppressed?”

“Do not distress your tender heart, my sweet love,” replied the young man, soothingly stroking the maiden’s cheek, “with such gloomy forebodings. The class of men who will be drawn into the war by the cry which has already been raised for the ‘preservation of the *integrity* of the Union’ (as if the ‘*integrity* of the Union,’ in the best and only desirable sense of the term, had not already been sacrificed), are a brave people; and courage without chivalry, or a high sense of justice and magnanimity, if that be a better term, is but a low instinct which man holds in common with the brute creation. If

we are beaten, we will have the fortitude necessary to bear our misfortunes ; and the class to which I allude, if they can control affairs, will have the magnanimity to make our misfortunes as little galling as possible."

"Ah!" replied the maiden, as she softly pressed the hand upon her cheek, "when angry passions fill the heart, the low, soft voice of man's better nature is often stilled for the time ; and, I fear, before the passion that must be engendered by strife can be stilled——"

"Florence ! Miss Seymour !" interrupted Dr. Hansel (who had approached unobserved), speaking in a voice that trembled with suppressed anger, caused, doubtless, by the lover-like attitude in which he found the two young people. "Your mother desires your immediate presence in the house."

"I hope, sir," said Mr. Stewart, drawing the young lady's hand through his arm, and approaching the old gentleman, "that Mrs. Hansel will pardon me for having detained Miss Seymour in the night air. I became interested in a discussion of the political situation, and——"

"Yes, I see—ahem," interrupted the old gentleman, with ill-suppressed anger. "By the bye, the papers have just come, and I find that our troops have invaded Virginia. They crossed yesterday morning before daylight, from Washington to Alexandria, and the few rebels and traitors whose discretion did not get the better part of their valor were captured and imprisoned. By far the greater number of them, however, fought the 'sacred soil' with their rapidly-vanishing heels, as I knew, from the first, they would do. They killed young Ellsworth, however, for which a thousand necks will have to be stretched."

"Then," said Mr. Stewart, with a forbearing smile,

“you are not willing to take the advice of some of your best people, to ‘let the South slide in peace.’ ”

“No, sir,” said the old gentleman, angrily. “The South cannot slide till we have hanged a few thousand traitors. Then she will have to slide back into whatever position we may choose to assign her.”

“But, doctor, an old adage tells us ‘catching goes before hanging,’ ” laughed the young man.

“Yes,” replied the old gentleman, sarcastically, “the only difficulty will be to catch them, for they proved themselves at Alexandria to be uncommonly good runners.”

“Oh!” said the young man, with a smile, “our boys would scorn to come out second best at anything, even if it should be getting out of the way of ‘raw heads and bloody bones.’ ”

“You are quite facetious, sir,” said the doctor, with a pallor that was perceptible even in the starlight.

“But not at all disposed to be blood-thirsty,” answered the young man, quietly, “as I can call Miss Seymour to witness, for we have been talking on political subjects.” But, instead of responding to the appeal, the lady gave her companion’s arm a convulsive pressure, and, on looking into her face, he found it even paler than that of Dr. Hansel.

“I do not understand you, sir; nor do I understand what you mean by ‘raw heads and bloody bones,’ ” said the old gentleman, evidently growing more angry.

“Take a seat here on the porch, sir,” said Mr. Stewart, as they ascended the front steps, “and I will explain, after I have delivered Miss Seymour into the hands of her mother.”

As the pair passed down the long hall, Miss Seymour

again pressed her companion's arm, and, looking up into his face, said, in a low voice: "Please promise me that you will not exasperate my step-father by your bantering jests, and that you will not become offended at anything he may say. He is so unaccustomed to opposition," she explained.

"Certainly not, my darling," said Mr. Stewart, as a puzzled expression passed over his face; "I would not, for any consideration, offend any one whom you respect, particularly an old gentleman, who is my guest. 'Your people shall be my people; your God shall be my God,' sweet one."

"Thank you, dar— darling," came in a trembling whisper from the lady's lips, thrilling her lover's heart and intoxicating his brain, as he threw open the parlor door, and, approaching Mrs. Hansel, apologized in a confused manner for having detained Miss Seymour in the dewy air.

Returning to the piazza, Mr. Stewart found Dr. Hansel promenading rapidly its full length. Taking him by the arm and walking by his side he said, pleasantly:

"Dr. Hansel, my good friend, since Virginia is actually invaded, and the war begun, suppose we agree, for the future, to ignore the subject of politics in our conversation."

"I think it would be best, sir," replied the old gentleman, stiffly, "since it pleases you to be so very facetious and sarcastic."

"Not sarcastic, doctor," answered the young man, "I have not spoken one word in bitterness against your people this afternoon."

"Why should you ever have done so?" asked the old gentleman, loftily. "They have always been true to the

government, and patriotic to the core, while your people are to-day traitors. Yes, sir, rebels and traitors deserving the gallows.”

“The ‘blue-light burners,’ doctor, who gave friendly warning signals to a foreign foe along the New England coast, and the gentle spirits who prayed that the Mexicans might welcome our gallant boys under Scott and Taylor with bloody hands to hospitable graves, did not possess much of what we here call patriotism.”

“Have you no more indictments to bring, sir,” said the doctor, freeing his arm from his companion’s hand, and bowing with mock politeness. “I see you do not deny that your people are rebels and traitors.”

“We desire to ignore the subject of politics, doctor, and if I should bring forward other indictments, to which you would also have to plead guilty, your present ire would not be by any means appeased. As to our being rebels and traitors, we in the South consider a profound respect for the fundamental law of the land to be the highest patriotism; and active opposition to the commands of the government, and a desire to defeat its lawful objects, in a war waged under and in strict accordance with its laws, as the blackest treason, and almost the only treason that can be known to the laws as they now stand.”

“Then, according to your own showing, your people are guilty of the blackest treason, for you are already engaged in active opposition to the commands of the government, and are preparing to wage flagrant war against it.”

“No; we have withdrawn from the government of the United States. In its formation we agreed to delegate to it certain rights and powers; and it was to protect our rights and interests, not only as a whole people, but as a community of individual states. The rights of the

Southern states have been assailed and denied by the party which has obtained control of the government ; the compact has been violated and virtually annulled ; and we have resumed the rights which we delegated, and are preparing to defend our land and homes from invasion by those who have heaped every other wrong and injustice upon us. If we should be considered still a part of the United States, the government has no right to wage a war for our subjection. Our people consider constitutions as above and superior to governments, and when a government violates, and makes itself superior to its constitution, we have no more respect for it, than for any other powerful organized mob or band of revolutionists."

"Then, in your opinion, the present United States Government is only a powerful organized mob !" exclaimed the doctor, forgetting his anger, and laughing aloud at the supreme impudence of the insinuation.

"Let us see," said the young man, calmly ; "the Abolition party, Free-soilers, etc., by their own acts and admissions, regard political faith as a silly joke, and fidelity to the constitution as the merest foolishness. These, amalgamated with the Republican party, are in control of the government—are the government, riding over all that may stand in their way, and regarding the fundamental laws no more than the highwayman who demands your money or your life. Now, in the dim future, when that spirit shall have made a wreck of your government, as it must do unless the more conservative West shall take control, if the candid historian, as he writes among the bat-inhabited ruins of the Capitol at Washington, does not say something of that kind, it will be because 'reason has flown to brutish beasts.'"

"'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad !'"

quoted the doctor, indulging in a burst of laughter that was heard even through the doors of the parlor.

“Ah! doctor,” said the young man, pleasantly, as he again took the old gentleman by the arm, and led him in the direction of the dining-room, where the bell had already sounded for supper, “you are a true philosopher, and it has been the study of my life to adopt or imbibe the same philosophy—the power to approve in moderation what pleases me, and to laugh at all else; leaving to vulgar minds and to low instincts the indulgence of anger.”

At supper, though Dr. Hansel continued to speak of political matters, he did so in a pleasant vein of running comment on the news. But, as the Misses Anderson were not present to “make things lively,” the meal was rather a bore to the two young people, notwithstanding the fact that Miss Seymour, pleased at Dr. Hansel’s apparent good humor, found opportunities to give her lover many timid glances of gratitude, which caused the ingenuous young gentleman to color slightly several times, under a sense of being the recipient of approbation not fully merited.

As Mr. Stewart was escorting Mrs. Hansel to the parlor, after supper, a note was handed him with the information that a gentleman had left it, requesting that it should be attended to immediately, and had then ridden rapidly away. After seating the lady, the young man returned to the dining-room; and, having read the note, ordered his horse to be brought out at once. Returning to the parlor, and chatting pleasantly for a few moments, he took leave of his guests, with regrets that a matter of pressing importance requiring his immediate attention would deprive him of the pleasure of seeing them again during the evening, perhaps.

"You will, however, return during the night, Mr. Stewart?" enquired Dr. Hansel, as the young gentleman was making his final bow at the door.

"Oh, undoubtedly, sir," replied Mr. Stewart, confidently, "as you have fully determined to abandon 'The Oaks' to-morrow morning, I cannot consent that Miss Seymour, after her very recent fright, shall trust herself behind the Randolph bays with any less skillful driver than myself."

After her lover had left the room, Miss Seymour could not resist the desire which she felt to see him mount his steed and dash away in the starlight. This she accomplished, under the pretext of going to the dining-room for Marienne to sing her a French air. As the steed of her knight—a knight more chivalrous, in her eyes, than all those of ancient Castile—reared in frolicsome joy at the prospect of a good run, and finally sprang off with a succession of curvets and bounds, she almost fancied, as she noted the gleam of Mars, only one degree above the horizon, in a straight line with the level road, that the graceful figure which seemed so much at home in the saddle, was that of some errant hero of the olden time, about to charge, lance in rest, at the evil eye that seemed to flash a red gleam of defiance on him. Marienne returned with Miss Seymour to the parlor, and obligingly sang a number of the familiar airs of her childhood. As her hands glided over the keys of the piano, her diamond reflected the light of the lamps in a brilliant shower of coruscations, which soon attracted Dr. Hansel's attention. She had never before worn the valuable trinket; but, wishing to do especial honor to Mr. Stewart's lady guests, she had adorned her attire with all the aids needed to make it pleasing, including her recent purchase of

laces, as well as the elegant gem. As she finished the last song, and turned upon the piano stool, Dr. Hansel, who had previously given his wife a look which seemed to say, “Now listen and take notes!” remarked, “Thank you, Marienne; you sing unusually well, and I admire that simple and rather unique style of music. Were you ever in New Orleans?”

“Oh, yes, sir,” replied Marienne, as pleasing thoughts of her childhood’s home lent brightness to her expression, “I was never outside of that city till I was ten years old.”

“Ah!” said the old gentleman, drily. “That’s a magnificent diamond you wear; is it an heirloom?”

“No, sir; I have owned it only a very short time—since Monsieur’s return from the North,” answered Marienne, understanding the request implied by the gentleman’s outstretched hand, and placing the ring in it.

Dr. Hansel, taking the jewel to one of the lamps, and examining it critically, handed it to Mrs. Hansel with the remark:

“It is of the purest water, and is a remarkably fine gem.”

Then, turning to Marienne, with a hard, cold expression in his face, he went on—

“That ring is worth—I don’t know how much—more than a thousand dollars, however. Is it not a very costly present for a gentleman to give to a female dependant?”

Marienne colored to the roots of her hair as she replied, “It was not a present from Monsieur, sir. He was not even the bearer of it. It came in Cesare’s hands, and was sent me by a lady.”

“Who is Cesare?” asked Dr. Hansel, bluntly.

“My brother, sir.”

“And who is the lady?”

"I don't know her name ; she was an eccentric person whom Monsieur met on the cars."

"I thought Fox brought the ring?"

"He did, sir," answered the poor girl, while her eyes flashed. "Monsieur refused to allow her to send the ring, and she deceived Cesare into believing that the bundle in which she wrapped it belonged to me."

"Where did Cesare meet her?"

"On the cars, sir."

"Did he also go North?"

"No, sir ; Cesare went to the station to meet Monsieur, and saw the lady on the cars."

"And I suppose the accommodating conductor can bear witness that this tale will bear 'telling to the marines,' eh?"

"Sir!" exclaimed, rather than questioned, Marienne, while her eyes appeared to emit vivid flashes more piercing than any from her diamond.

"I say that the 'person' must have been a *remarkably* eccentric woman," said the doctor, dropping the ring into Marienne's hand, and rubbing his fingers over the lapel of his coat, as if to wipe away a stain. Then walking to the other end of the room and throwing up a sash, he sat on the window sill, and looked out into the night.

Marienne had never thought of the possibility of any one's doubting the seemingly romantic history of the ring ; and, as she realized, with pale cheeks and compressed lips, how improbable it might appear to one disposed to be skeptical, she was on the point of going to confront Dr. Hansel, and to make him put into words the insult conveyed by his manner. But, glancing at Miss Seymour, whose cheeks were as pale as her own, and seeing what she took to be an expression of sympathy in her counte-

nance, while Mrs. Hansel's indicated only extreme embarrassment, she turned suddenly to the young lady and said, while she extended her hand with the diamond lying upon her open palm, “Do you object to placing this on your finger by the side of your chaste and beautiful lapis lazuli?”

“Oh, not in the least!” exclaimed Miss Seymour, pleasantly, while a slight flush dispelled her paleness, placing the ring on her finger, by the side of the stone which matched her deep blue eyes in color. “See,” she said, holding up her hand so as to catch the direct rays of the nearest lamp, “equally chaste, and far surpassing in all other qualities.”

“Thank you, dear,” said Marienne, while a moisture softened the expression of her eyes. “And now,” she added, rising and taking her companion's hand, “if you will go with me to my room, I will show you a letter written in reference to the diamond which will amuse you.”

“Florence!” called Dr. Hansel, peremptorily, from the other end of the room, as the two were leaving, hand in hand, “you are overtaxing your strength, and it is past ten o'clock; I desire you to retire to your own room immediately.”

Miss Seymour paused, looked at her mother, and then, at once, pressing Marienne's hand, and excusing herself, took a seat by the old lady, and raised her pale, withered hand to her lips. When Marienne, in the quiet seclusion of her own room, recalled the earnest appeal expressed in Mrs. Hansel's eyes, as Miss Seymour appeared hesitating to render immediate obedience to the command of her stepfather, she came to the conclusion that there was but one head in Dr. Hansel's family, and that the form of government was an absolute monarchy.

The next morning, before sunrise, Dr. Hansel, having ascertained that Mr. Stewart had not returned, and that Fox had been absent for twenty-four hours, was up, and hurrying Dick to bring out the phaeton, expressing his intention to take breakfast at the Atheneum. Marienne sent coffee to the rooms, and as the phaeton was driven around to the front, Miss Seymour came into the room where she was dressing the vases with flowers, bringing the first early magnolia blossom in her hand. "See," said she, holding up the flower, "I have found the first magnolia. What a beauty! Immaculate as the snow, sweet as the south wind, and so delicate that a touch will tarnish it. I have always thought it ought to be the emblem of nobleness, truth, and purity."

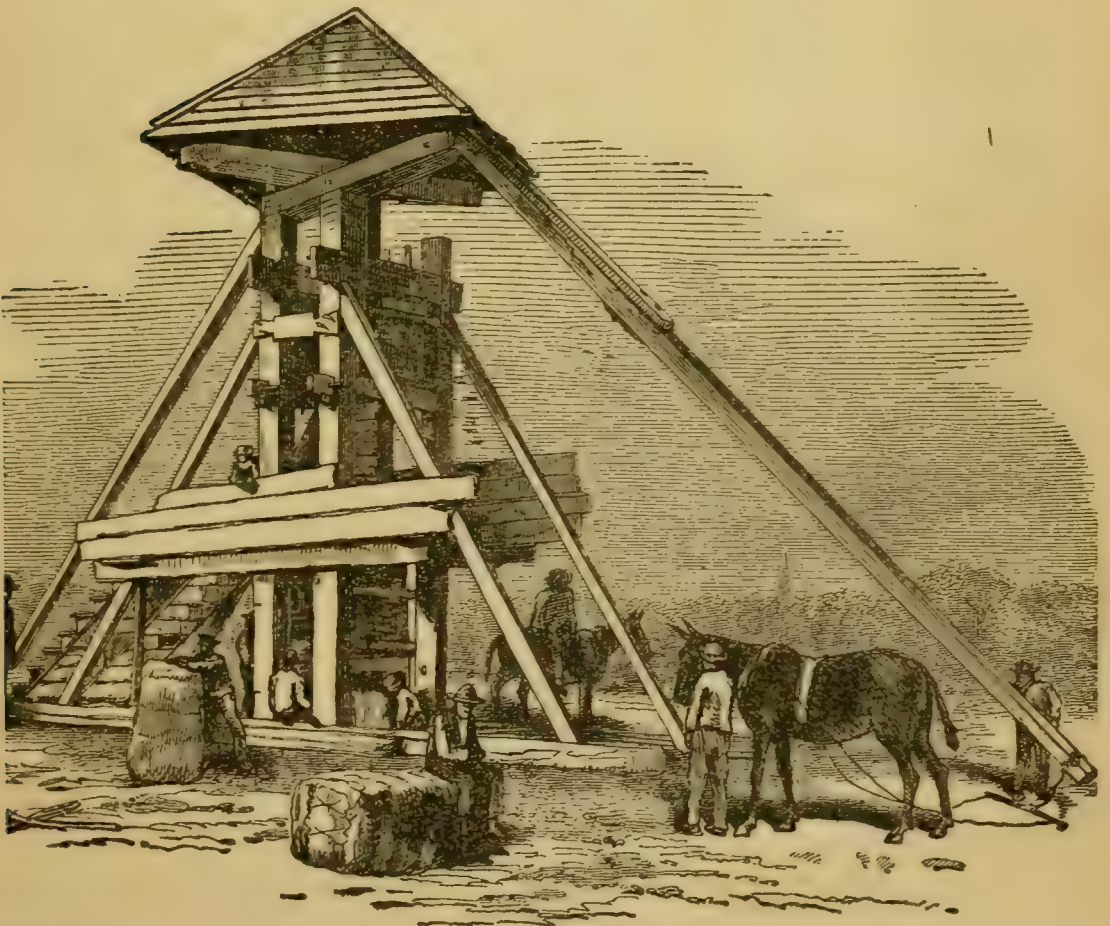
"Yes," answered Marienne, "it is a magnificent flower, and a favorite with all people in the South. Monsieur prizes it above all others, and calls it the queen of flowers."

"Ah!" said Miss Seymour, touching it gently to her lips; "then I shall place this one in front of his plate, to welcome him when he returns."

Taking a delicate white moss-rose bud from among the flowers that Marienne had gathered, she dropped it into the heart of the magnolia; and, putting it in a slender vase, placed it upon the table, with the words, "Sit there, queen, and deliver my message." Then running to Marienne, and seizing both of her hands, she said, hurriedly, "Papa is out at the carriage, and is calling me. I am glad I found you alone. Neither of us has ever had a sister, and I feel a kindly sympathy for every one who, like myself, has been destitute of a tie so close and tender. How pleasant it would be, if, in what is sometimes called the 'hurly-burly of life,' our paths should

come together, and we could assume the duties of that delightful relationship toward each other. *Quien sabe?*—oh, but that is not French, is it? How dreadfully the languages do get mixed in my silly little head. Good-bye, dear.” And with a hasty kiss and pressure of the hands, she ran quickly from the room.

“Bless the warm-hearted, impulsive child!” said Marienne, as the door closed behind the graceful figure, forgetting that the “child” was only two years younger than herself. “God grant that the way may be smooth, for she is worthy of him!”



An Up-Country Cotton-press.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DARLING IMAGE IN PLASTIC CLAY.

"Hope's gayest wreaths are made of earthly flowers."—ANON.

*"O! reined tongue and bursting heart
Are hard at once to bear."—JOANNA BAILLIE'S BASIL.*

MR. STEWART was much disappointed on his return home, a little after sunrise, to find his guests departed. Marienne decided not to speak of the episode of the previous evening, and sincerely hoped she was in error in believing Dr. Hansel desirous to erect an insuperable barrier between the lovers. She related to the young man the little incidents connected with the magnolia, and he took it to his room, having first ordered that Selim should be brought out again as soon as he had fed and rested sufficiently.

The note which had called him from his pleasant duties as host was from Fox, and doubtless contained important information. It ran as follows :

"KUKLOS!

"33—Storm house,—Mathew's plantation.—one Φ.—Wandering Jew X.

"NIGHT H'K. R."

Whatever may have been the meaning of those seemingly meaningless words and characters, Mr. Stewart rode rapidly seven or eight miles till he came to a large plantation lying on each side of the road. Throwing off the

top rail of the fence on the side opposite the buildings, he leaped his horse over, and galloping across the cotton beds was soon swallowed up by the darkness.

An hour before daybreak a party of nine horsemen hitched their horses in the suburbs of Barrensville, and passed on foot down a street leading to the depot, while far off to the southward could be heard the distant rumbling of an approaching train. As the party halted at the silent depot, evidently to await the incoming train, one of them spoke to another, who seemed to be under arrest :

“Wheless and Purst did not fare so well. We had conclusive proof in their case. You came to look after them, you admit, and other circumstantial evidence justifies our course. Your people can never hope to pass here as Southerners. Every other word uttered by a New Englander is a shibboleth to betray him. We shall have the last of your pack before very long, no matter if they may be scattered from Norfolk to the mouth of the Rio Grande. If *you* are ever caught in the South again, now that the war is begun, unless you wear the uniform of the cause you serve, you will be hanged as high as Haman. Take due notice and remember !”

Just as Mr. Stewart had finished his breakfast, and ordered his horse to be brought around for his contemplated trip to Barrensville and the Atheneum, Fox arrived, and coming straight into the house, exclaimed :

“Monsieur, let us go to your room a moment. I found some very important papers in that fellow’s carpet-bag. It was a more important capture than we thought. Pity, we did not hold on to him till we examined his baggage.”

For more than an hour the two young men were closeted together, and on coming out Mr. Stewart informed Marianne, while Fox ate his breakfast, that they should

both be absent from home for about a week, as Fox had to go to New Orleans, and he himself should go to Atlanta on important business. He requested her to send Dick on the next morning with a basket of flowers and a note to Miss Seymour, inquiring after her health, and intimating the cause of his failure to pay his respects in person, and also requested that flowers be sent every morning until his return. Before Fox had finished his breakfast, Dick returned with the phaeton, bringing the information that Miss Seymour had not been very much fatigued by her ride; and the two self-constituted guardians of the peace and well-being of the country immediately took their departure for the railway station.

On the next morning, before Sol had saluted the rosy cheek of Aurora, Marienne was out engaged in the congenial task of selecting and arranging the choicest flowers into a floral poem for her friend. In a salver-shaped basket she grouped the most significant emblems, arranging bright colors into striking and harmonious contrasts, and in the centre of the whole she placed a fine magnolia, with a delicate white-moss rosebud inclosed within its creamy petals. Then, calling Dick, who had already saddled Selim, she told him the basket must be delivered within an hour, so that Miss Seymour could have the flowers upon her breakfast table.

It was late in the forenoon before Dick returned, and during his absence he had exchanged the bright face with which he set out for one of a most lugubrious aspect.

"I don't know'm," he said, in response to Marienne's inquiry, "whether Miss Flo'nce is wuss or better. I speck dey has all got de small-pox up dar."

"Why, what do you mean?" inquired Marienne, anxiously.

“Well, marm, I’ll tell you all ’bout it,” replied Dick, placing his felt hat under his arm, and stepping up on the porch. “When I got dar de house was all shot up, an’ Jane wan’t looking’ out’n de winders nor nothin’, like she always is ; an’ when I knocked at de do’ nobody didn’t come, an’ den I bumped it hard, an’ bimeby a white ’oman come—one o’ dem ole sort wid cork-screw curls all ’roun’—an’ she axed me what I was kickin’ up a racket for, an’ what I want ; and when I tole her, she tuck de basket out’n my hand, an’ told me to go ’long home ; an’ I tole her I’d wait for de answer, an’ she tole me dar wan’t no answer, an’ to git up an’ git ; an’ wid dat she shot de do’ an’ locked it. I was mighty perlite, an’ waited an’ waited ; an’ bimeby I bumped at de do’ agin, an’ she come dar, mad es a wet hen, an’ tole me to biggone, like I was a dog ; an’ I tole her I wan’t gwine to take my foot off’n dat po’ch flo’ tell I got de answer an’ my basket, ef I had to stan’ dar till my toes took root ; and wid dat she flounced off, she did, an’ come a prancin’ back wid de basket, an’ pitched it at me, an’ shot de do’ right in my face an’ locked it, an’ lef’ me stan’in’ dar like a fool.”

“Why, Dick,” said Marienne, amused at the negro’s expression of countenance, “she hardly treated you with civility !”

“Dat’s what I say !” responded Dick, with energy ; “I got mad es blazes, an’ I looked all ’roun’ to see ef dat nigger Dolfus Jones wan’t peepin’ ’roun’ de corner, laffin’ ’bout it ; an’ if I’d seen him, dar would o’ been one par o’ black eyes at dat ’Theneum a heap blacker dan de good Lawd made ’em !”

“I hope you would not have made a disturbance, Dick,” said Marienne, reprovingly. “I fancy you were disappointed at not seeing Jane,” she added, laughingly ;

“it may be that they suspect you of a desire to elope with her.”

“Lawd, miss !” replied Dick, with a bashful grin, “what bisness is niggers got, wid ’lopin ? Dem’s white folks’s capers ! But, to tell de troof, I had sorter set my min’ on seein’ Jane, an’ it’s cur’ous dat she wan’t spyin’ ’roun’ no whar.”

Marienne was much disturbed by Dick’s account of the uncivil reception of her floral offering, but felt assured that Miss Seymour had received it in quite a different spirit. The lines of her face grew hard, and a deep red spot burned upon either cheek, as she thought of the probable cause of the uncivility of the household authorities to her messenger. But she continued to send Dick, morning after morning, with the choicest flowers, in accordance with Mr. Stewart’s request, yet with no better results than at first.

“I don’t keer nothin’ ’bout dat sassy ole white ’oman,” said Dick, one day, after having returned, as usual, without getting a sight of Jane, “but I des wish dey’d sen’ dat Dolfus to de do’ one time ! I’d make him pay for all de sassyness of dat ole cork-screw ’oman ! Arter I got throo’ wid him dar wouldn’t be five cents’ wuf o’ dat whole fifteen-hundred-dollar nigger left ! An’ it’s mighty cur’ous dat nobody never does see Jane nowhar !”

Eight days elapsed before Mr. Stewart returned, alone and looking much jaded and travel-worn. He informed Marienne that he had heard from Fox, who was probably at that time in Little Rock, and would return by way of Jackson, Mississippi. Marienne told him what she knew of Miss Seymour, or, rather, what Dick had gathered from common rumor in Barrensville, that she was quite ill from nervous prostration. She also gave

him Dick's account of the manner in which he and the flowers he had carried each day had been received. Without a moment of unnecessary delay, the young man ordered the phaeton to be brought out to take him to Barrensville, and went to his room to change his attire.

“Monsieur,” said Marienne, stopping him in the hall, “I feel it to be proper for me to tell you that Dr. Hansel does not believe the history I gave him of my diamond.”

“Well, what of it?” asked the young man, looking at her wonderingly. “What does he believe with reference to it?”

“I don't know,” replied the poor girl, while a hot flush overspread her features, and angry tears came into her eyes. “He asked me if it was not a very costly present for a gentleman to give a dependent.”

“Ah! the old——But, never mind, my poor girl; recollect the adage of your people: *Honi soit qui mal y pense*,” said the young man, soothingly, as he proceeded to his room.

Dick required but a few minutes to harness the horses and bring around the phaeton. Indeed, he went at it with such alacrity and eagerness that, disdaining to go around to the gate, he leaped the lot fence at a clear bound, and as he put on the first bridle, he said, as if speaking to the horse:

“Hurry up, Mars' Chyarles is goin' to Barrensville! Hooray! Now him an' dat ole cork-screw 'oman fer it! I'd give a dollar to see her cave when he turns up dat nose at her! Yah! yah! yah! An' ef I could des ketch dat Dolfus, out at de front gate! Wake snakes; oh, lordy; you bet!” and squaring himself, he made vigorous prelusive feints with his fists at the horse's nose, winding

up with a high kick against the bottom of the feed trough, which hurled the corn-cobs up to the ceiling, and caused the horse to start back with a snort.

Impatient as the young man was, he was not under the necessity of urging his driver; and the bays glided over the space, as Dick expressed it, fairly "sweepin' de duss' out'n de road." On ringing at the Atheneum he was detained but a few moments before a demure-looking female drew the door half open and demanded his card, with a corporal-of-the-guard air.

"I left home hurriedly," said the young man, pleasantly, "and have no card. My name is Stewart, and I desire to see Miss Seymour and Dr. Hansel."

"I will take your name up, sir," said the female, staring at him as she commenced to close the door.

"How is Miss Seymour?" asked the young man, stepping into the opening, and pushing the door fully open.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the woman, with a show of confused anger, "she does not wish to be disturbed. Will you have a seat in the hall till I return?"

"No, thank you," replied the young man, with a pleasant smile, "I shall await Dr. Hansel in the public parlor. I know the way, and will not trouble you."

As Mr. Stewart ascended to the parlor the servant went in an opposite direction, evidently not in an amiable mood. Fully ten minutes elapsed before she made her appearance at the parlor door, with the message that Dr. Hansel was engaged, and begged to be excused.

"Certainly, certainly," said the young man, as his face colored slightly. "Say to Dr. Hansel that I am in no haste myself, and will await his leisure. Will you do me the favor to bring me the latest paper?"

Without returning an answer the woman slammed the

door and retired, but in a few minutes the door was opened by Dr. Hansel himself.

“I hope you will excuse me, Mr. Stewart,” said the old man, with stiff politeness. “I was very busily engaged with accounts, sir—troublesome business—hope you’re well, sir.”

“Quite well, doctor, thank you,” said the young man, pleasantly. “How are Mrs. Hansel and Miss Seymour?”

“Miss Seymour is quite ill, sir. So ill that we have to keep all noise and excitement out of the house, sir. By the by, I suppose you have heard of the terrible fight at Great Bethel?”

“I’ve heard of the skirmish there,” replied the young man, politely. “Who is Miss Seymour’s physician, sir?”

“Well,” said the old man, hesitatingly, “we have but little faith in physic for nervous prostration, sir; time and quiet, sir, time and quiet and a little fine brandy, are the best physic. Major Winthrop and thirty others were killed, and over one hundred wounded at Great Bethel by the rebels. But our New England boys did terrible execution, and fought till they grew weary of slaughter.”

“Ah!” replied the young man, “Our Magruder was there, and if he had been anything of a philanthropist he would have put up his pipe and prevented the carnage. He lost eight of his own men.”

“Eight, indeed! He lost over a thousand actually killed, besides his wounded! I have it from one of our own papers.”

“Then your information *must* be reliable. Magruder’s report gives only one actually killed and seven wounded, but, perhaps, he made a miscount. His force was only eighteen hundred; so, I suppose, if your account be correct, there is none left but Magruder.”

“Very few, if any, sir; for we had five thousand troops

there, all from New England, and it is impossible to imagine less slaughter than that I give, considering the fact that New Englanders are always reckless and daring when they meet a foe."

"It seems so, doctor, provided the foe is not a foreign one. In that case it seems they are afraid to trust their reckless, daring spirits lest the enemy should be exterminated ; so they stay at home with singular unanimity."

"What do you mean, sir? Didn't we furnish three-fourths of the troops that fought the war of independence?"

"By no means. New England furnished about one-sixteenth the number of troops you have been led to suppose by your histories."

"Indeed ! Then I am to infer that you accuse our histories of stating falsehoods ?"

"They make a false impression by leading one to suppose that the number of enlistments represent fairly the number of troops furnished in that war by the different states or sections."

"And did they not ?"

"By no means. The New England people refused—excepting a thousand or so—to enlist for a longer period than six months at a time ; and one man who served eight years consequently counted for sixteen enlistments. Divide the number of troops you think New England furnished by sixteen and you will not be very far from the truth."

"I know our troops, as a rule, enlisted for six months at a time ; but as that was the case every where else, the fact does not disturb the relative proportion of troops furnished by us."

"I beg pardon, sir, but I must again contradict the impression made on your mind by your histories. The Southern troops enlisted first for three years, and then for

the full term of the war. So in order to find the number of troops furnished by the South for eight years service, you should divide the number of enlistments by two. Our Southern people have been very much to blame for allowing the ‘Peter Parleys’ of literature to write all the school histories. New England has never, against a foreign foe, raised, equipped and sent forward her troops with one-tenth the alacrity, impatient haste and fierce joy with which she now pours them out to invade our land and destroy our homes.”

“She poured them out in eighteen hundred and twelve and again in the Mexican war.”

“Not very lavishly, sir. In 1812 the six New England states furnished, to be exact, 5162 men, and the little and much-abused state of South Carolina furnished 5696, or over 500 more than all of New England. In that war the entire North furnished 58,552 and the entire South, with a smaller population, furnished 96,812, or not very far from double the number—fully double considering the populations. In the Mexican war, Massachusetts furnished 1047 men and all the other New England states furnished 1534 men. Plucky little South Carolina furnished 5262, or more than double as many men as all of New England; while the entire North furnished 23,054 men and the entire South furnished 43,630 men. This shows the South to have furnished, according to their respective populations, about four times as many as the North for the Mexican war.”

“I see,” said the old man with some show of impatience, “that you discredit the histories of the Peter Parleys, and adopt those of the Baron Munchausens.”

“No, sir; I leave both to those who can be ‘pleased with a rattle—tickled with a straw.’ I get my facts and

figures from the archives at Washington. If our people had not been so patriotic, generous and chivalrous in fighting the battles of the Union, and in compelling respect for the flag which is now sought to be made the emblem of our disgrace, we should now be better able to defend our land from invasion, and our homes from the desecrating hand of the spoiler. When I think of the mad haste with which New England, in particular, is rushing her men into Virginia, I am reminded of a gawky boy with whom, in my youthful days, I attended a primary school. He would meanly suffer his plucky little brother to do all the fighting if the good name or honor of the family should be assailed, and then beat him furiously if he persistently claimed a fair share of the luncheon-pie."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the old man, with seeming amusement. "You are facetious. But the little brother is going to get a terrible beating this time, and in future he will not be allowed to have any of the pie!"

"Ah! doctor," replied the young man, sadly, "you philosophers can laugh over these little matters, but they make men in the South, who are not philosophers, terribly angry. Even my philosophy cannot so far subdue the natural instincts of humanity as to arm me against the feeling that I had rather sleep in death with the little brother—dead of injuries and starvation—than to affiliate with the big one as he swaggers around full of pie. But, if you please, we will not speak of political matters. I desire to speak of Miss Seymour. You are, perhaps, aware, sir, that she is my affianced wife."

"Ha!" exclaimed the old man, growing very pale, and tightly compressing his lips, as he leaned over to recover a pencil which had dropped upon the floor.

“It was my desire,” continued the young man, with some embarrassment, “to speak to you and to Mrs. Hansel on this subject much sooner, but business of the utmost importance called me to a neighboring state, and I returned only this morning. Miss Seymour has not rejected my suit, and——”

“I have heard all about it, sir” interrupted the old man, speaking in a hard cold voice as if reading a “Whereas” preamble to a declaration of war, “and I must say that it was hardly in keeping with your avowed notions of so-called chivalry to take advantage of a mere child when she was more dead than alive from physical pain, and was under the impression that you had saved her life instead of being the cause of her injury.”

“Sir !” exclaimed the young man, springing to his feet, with pale lips and flashing eyes, “do you mean—what do you mean, sir !”

“Keep your seat, Mr. Stewart,” said the old man, quietly, but with a pallor again creeping over his face. “I mean that Miss Seymour has told me the whole affair ; that she believed you had saved her life instead of being the cause of her injury ; that believing herself bound by what she had spoken, or might have spoken, for aught she knew to the contrary, while unconscious, from physical suffering, of the meaning of her words, she thought honor compelled her to adhere to what she might have said, and she consequently bore her part in some nonsensical talk with you on the night before we left your house ; that she now sees fully how repugnant to her is the thought of marrying any one for years to come ; and that she has never cared for any but her cousin, Frank Conrad, whom she has regarded with very warm feelings from her childhood.”

“My God, sir ! it is *all* as false as——” The young man checked his utterance and covered his forehead with his hand, in a dazed sort of way.”

“I hope, sir,” said the old man, with mock meekness, “you will permit *me* now to ask what *you* mean !”

“I do not mean, sir,” said the young man, impulsively, “to insult you if I can avoid doing so. I have not known Miss Seymour for only a day, or a month, or a year. I have known her long enough to become fully conscious of the fact that she is as pure and guileless as the angels in heaven ; and if one of those pure spirits should come and repeat your words, still Miss Seymour’s repetition of them would be necessary to command by belief. I claim the right to hear Miss Seymour speak with her own lips on that subject.”

“That is a right which cannot be accorded you, sir,” said the old man, positively ; and added, feelingly, “My God, sir, what would you have ? Would you kill the child outright ? Is it not enough that she is half dead now from grief and mortification ? Poor child ! she feels the deepest sympathy and pity for you ; and censures herself for having allowed you to deceive yourself. You cannot be permitted to harrow her feelings. An interview in her present state of mind would be attended with the most serious consequences.”

“I can wait, sir, indeed, I insist on waiting, till she shall be strong enough to repeat your words, if it be her will to do so.”

“Waiting will avail nothing, sir, except to keep the poor child in her present state of nervous excitement, and I desire to have this thing ended at once and put at rest forever. Miss Seymour is of a particularly sensitive nature, and I made up my mind several days since that

my duty in the present precarious state of her health demanded that I should sacrifice my interests here for a short time, and take her out of the country if you determined to persist in this matter. I should have done this at once had she not suggested that you intended going to the war in a few days, and would call, if at all, only to take leave."

"Well, then, can I see her to take my final leave? For I shall leave for the seat of war on Monday."

"My God! sir, no! I cannot consent to jeopardize the child's life only to gratify a whim."

"Miss Seymour is aware of the fact that I am in the house, I presume; would you object to taking a note to her from me?"

"Not in the least, sir," replied the old man, with alacrity. "I regret that you cannot take leave in person, as you desire it so greatly, but I must perform my duty to her."

Mr. Stewart tore a fly-leaf from a book on the table by his side, and, after writing a few lines hurriedly, folded it and handed it to the old man, with the request:

"Please ask Miss Seymour to send the reply in her own handwriting."

The old man received the missive in silence, and immediately left the room. Minutes seemed hours to the young man, but finally, after the lapse, as it seemed to him, of half a day, the door opened softly, and Dr. Hansel handed him a gilt-edge missive without envelope. Turning to the window, with his back to the old man, he unfolded the paper and read the penciled lines:

"It is even so! Nothing is beautiful but truth.

"Yours,

"FLORENCE, Q. B. S. M."

The young man gazed at the words and letters as if unable to take in any part of the meaning so plainly conveyed ; wondered, in a dazed sort of way, what Q. B. S. M. might be intended to indicate ; asked himself if Dr. Hansel were such a man as could be guilty of forgery, and felt ashamed of the vulgar suspicion, as he admitted that the beautiful, round, smooth, unfashionable hand, every flourish of which he knew and loved, could not be counterfeited. He noticed that she had rubbed out half a line after the word “truth,” and that the “s” and the comma to “yours” were darker than the balance of the writing, thus indicating that they were made when the point of the pencil was moist from contact with her lips. Pressing that part of the sheet to his own lips, he muttered to himself : “Nothing is beautiful but truth—and *Florence is Truth!* Ah ! why didn’t the poor little darling image in plastic clay add that, or else add : ‘And nothing is true but heaven?’ Poor little dear, I know her heart is wrung, as well as mine, and I know it is not in her pure heart to judge harshly ; but the serpent has come into my Eden—into *our* Eden—and only time, the great alchemist, can show her pure gold where this suspicious and unfriendly old man has made her believe—no ; *fear*—that there is only dross.”

Then, turning to the old man, he said :

“Doctor, can you tell me what ‘Q. B. S. M.’ may stand for ? The Spaniards have a custom of sometimes affixing those letters after their signatures to signify ‘*Qui Bueso Sus Manos*—Who kisses your hands.’ Could you stab a man to the heart, and then hand his bleeding corpse ‘Q. B. S. M.’ traced with the point of your dripping dagger ? ”

“No, sir,” replied the old man, looking at his com-

panion curiously ; “I could not stab a man to the heart at all !”

“No, of course not—not to his physical heart with a material dagger ! Doctor, ‘nothing is beautiful but truth’—the Italian proverb you know, ‘*rien n’est beau,*’ etc.—and nothing is true but heaven !”

“Truth is beautiful and heaven is true,” replied the old man, sententiously, still regarding the young man curiously.

“That would be a fine text for a sermon, doctor. Think how you could amplify on the beauty of truth as exemplified in the divine spirit, and how you could heap up cloud-piercing monuments of eloquent anathema upon that miserable libel which we call humanity. Let me advise you, doctor, to take that as a text for your next sermon.”

“I select my texts only from the Holy Scriptures, sir,” replied the old man, stiffly.

“Ah ! Well, as you can’t preach a sermon from it, let me suggest that you suffer it to flit through your mind occasionally during your moments of prayer, when laying bare the impulses of your heart before Him who reads the innermost secrets of your soul.”

“Sir !” exclaimed the old man, with stern indignation, “I do not understand you !”

“Then, I fancy, we philosophers are fallible in intellect, as well as in impulse and inspiration, like commoner mortals, and I will take my leave. Farewell, doctor, we may never meet again in this life, but it is my prayer that Heaven may deal leniently with you.”

Before the old man had recovered from his astonishment and indignation sufficiently to frame a response of leave-taking suited to the occasion, the young man was descending the broad staircase with a quick and nervous

tread. As he passed out into the open air a soiled kid glove, from which the fingers had been cut, fell upon the gravel walk in front of him, and merry peals of suppressed laughter, proceeding from one of the windows above, revealed to him the whereabouts of his merry little cousins, whose bright eyes he could see peering through the bars of the closed lattice. Taking off his hat, and dropping the mutilated glove—which was doubtless intended to represent the promised mitten—into it, he kissed his hand to the little maidens, and spoke in a tone of voice which he knew would carry his message to a lofty window around the adjacent corner :

“I bow before the inevitable. Good-bye, my little darling. I leave for the war on Monday. Should we meet no more in this life, in heaven we shall know that ‘beautiful truth’ has not been without its personification on earth ! Farewell !”

The merry little maidens, as they quickly disappeared from the window on hearing the sound of their cousin’s voice, lest they should be detected by the school authorities in a gross violation of rules, did not notice that the word of endearment was used in the singular—indeed they did not tarry to hear any part of the valediction. But the poor, heart-sore, double victim of falsehood and misunderstanding, lying upon a bed near the elevated window, whose sash was raised to admit the cooling breeze ; whose every sense, on this morning in particular, was painfully acute, noticed the fact, and covering her head with a pillow, to smother the sound of her grief, she sobbed aloud in mortal agony of heart torture.

As Dick opened the door of the phaeton for the master, the young man noticed that his coat was torn in the skirt and untidy in appearance generally, but they had passed

through the town, and were sweeping along the level, sandy road in the shade of the forest, before his mind recurred to the matter, and he asked :

"What is the matter with your coat, Dick?"

"Well, sar, I'll tell you," replied the negro, turning his face so that the master could see only the back of his head; "I was talkin' to Mr. Pryor's Dan, an' 'long come dat 'Dolfus, wid a wheelbarrer, haulin' trash out'n de yard; an' he flung sassy eyes at me, an' bimeby he let loose some slack jaw, an' wid dat I axed Dan Pryor to hol' my hosses, an' I lit out on dat nigger, an' I made de nose-juice fly wuss'n a town pump; an' when I got through wid him he looked like a rag doll baby dat had done bin through a cot'n beater."

"Why, Dick," said the young man, with a sickly attempt at a smile, "I am surprised at you to be making a row where Jane may have seen you! And besides, I thought you and Adolphus were good friends."

"Well, sir, I thought maybe Jane was peepin' out'n de winder at me, and dat's one reason I fit so savigrous, an' I des wanted to let *somebody* know who's what."



Dick.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HARP IS ON THE WILLOW.

*"Farewell! there's but one pang in death,
One only."*—MRS. HEMANS.

*"Sick of this bad world,
The daylight and the sun grow painful!"*—ADDISON'S CATO.

WHEN Mr. Stewart arrived at home, he noticed that Marianne was excited and nervous, and that she spoke with hesitancy, as she asked:

"How is Miss Seymour, Monsieur?"

"Not so well to-day, but not seriously sick, I hope," replied the young man, evasively. "Dr. Hansel is in vigorous health—I did not see the old lady—and my little cousins are as bright and saucy as usual. I did not bid the latter a formal adieu, and when I leave I shall ask you to send them a basket of flowers, with a magnolia for Miss Seymour."

"Will you go away again so soon?"

"Oh yes; I must leave on Monday for Virginia. The trouble will soon begin in earnest, and it behooves the laggards, who are men, to delay no longer to put themselves where each may do a man's duty."

"Will you not wait for Cesare?"

"Oh, Fox will be here, no doubt, to-morrow; but he will not go with me. He can do the cause better service at home, looking after the affairs which now engage him, than I can hope to do in the field. But I have promised

Dick that he shall go, and he is wild with joy at the thought. By the by, please see that mammy has his clothes ready by Monday. To-morrow being Sunday she will have no time to lose.”

“Monsieur,” said Marienne, timidly, “will you allow me to pack the diamond with your valuables. I feel that in my possession it has talismanic powers for evil, and I desire never to see it again.”

“Oh no,” laughed the young man, “you must not yield to such morbid fancies. Keep your gem, but keep it concealed. The time may come—who knows what may be before us—when, by its money value, it may do you inestimable service.”

Without replying, Marienne left the room to begin the preparations for the departure on Monday. Going to a closet up stairs in which were kept many odds and ends, she drew out a full-skirted Indian hunting blouse, made of thick, well-tanned, buckskin, and profusely ornamented with wampum of various gaudy colors, which Mr. Stewart had worn at the previous Mardi Gras masquerade in New Orleans. Concealing the substantial garment in a sheet of cotton-batting, she hastened down to mammy’s house, where the two sat working till supper time; and after supper till mammy exclaimed :

“Dar ! de roosters is crowin’ for midnight. It’s Sunday, honey ! Stop your needle right dar, an’ let it stick. We’ll git up ’fore day Monday an’ finish de job.”

As Mr. Stewart desired to leave quietly, he went on horseback to take leave of his uncle and a few other friends and neighbors, on the next morning, and made it convenient to call at Bethel church and hear the conclusion of the services, after which he had a long private talk with Peter Dillard. On returning home he found

Fox already arrived, and the two sat up during the entire night, talking of business and other matters and writing numerous letters.

When the morning arrived, no sturdy laborers were heard going to the field with merry shouts or loud-voiced songs, and the few seen passing about wore solemn countenances, as if Sunday were holding over, and they were getting their minds into proper trim for one of Brother Elliott's most earnest sermons. As soon as breakfast was over, they congregated in the front yard and lounged about on the green turf, making quite a hero of Dick while they awaited the young master's movements. After Mr. Stewart had taken leave of Marienne, and had received mammy's tearful and sobbing vale-benediction, he was met on the front porch by Dick going to take leave of those in the house.

"Why, Dick," he asked, seeing that individual dressed in a substantial buckskin jacket, "where did you get that?"

"Well, sar, you see," replied the grinning darkie, "mammy an' marmsell made it out 'n dat fine Injun huntin' shirt o' yourn. Marmsell says it's de coat o' many colors from mammy, but she has done ripped off all de *colors*. Dey says dis jacket has got to last endurin' o' de war an' I mean to wear it back here ef de war lasts forty years."

Uncle George met the young master at the front steps, and, as spokesman for all the rest, expressed profound regret that he was called away on so perilous an undertaking, and gave fervent utterance to the hope that He who had numbered the hairs of his head would take him into His keeping and return him to his friends and home.

In reply the young man thanked him and all present for the kind feelings and wishes expressed; bespoke for

Fox the same kind feelings always vouchsafed to himself ; besought all to keep cool heads no matter what might occur in the future, and to take care of the women and children under all circumstances ; addressed a few pleasant remarks to the dusky maidens and stalwart youths, which caused the former to indulge in pleased but bashful snickers, while the latter uttered lusty shouts of laughter and applause, shook hands with all, amid a perfect Babel of tongues, and mounted his horse, which had been brought into the front yard.

“Mars’ Chyarles,” called Uncle George, leaving the crowd, who were putting Dick through an affectionate ordeal of leave-taking, “I wants to say one mo’ word ’bout Dick, sar. My brother what went wid your pa to de Mexican war says dat a nigger is a heap more liabler to git hit by dem cannon balls dan de white folks is. He said when your pa got shot an’ he went wid de amber-lanch so’jers to bring ’im out, all de cannon balls dat was shot at ’em come right straight for him, an’ he had to keep dodgin’ an’ hoppin’ ’round to keep from bein’ kilt entirely ; an’ all dat time de white so’gers didn’t have to even dodge nary time, an’ dat he don’t b’lieve a cannon ball come in a hundred yards of ’em ; an’ es a nigger is so liable to get hit, sar, I hope you’ll keep your eye on dat boy.”

“All right, Uncle George,” replied the young man, gravely ; “there will be danger, and I shall keep a lookout for Dick.”

“Good-bye, daddy,” said Dick, coming up at the moment, evidently much pleased by the attention that had been bestowed upon him by the plantation belles. “You needn’t be oneasy ’bout us ; we’s so’gers now, me an’ Mars’ Chyarles is, an’ we has to ’bey orders. Mars’ Chyarles

will 'bey de boss gineral an' I'll 'bey *him*. Ef he says 'Lay low, Dick!' I's gwine to burrer in de groun' like a gopher; an' ef he says 'Up an' skelp dem abolitioners, Dick!' I's gwine to snatch har wuss dan a match cott'n pickin'."

"Humph!" grunted Uncle George, as he watched the two "so'gers" galloping down the East road, accompanied by Fox, "I wonder ef dat young nigger thinks dem abolitioners is gwine to hold still for him to skelp 'em?"

"Ole 'oman," he called to mammy, who had come out on the piazza to wave her red bandanna at the departing horsemen, "ef dat young nigger o' yourn don't git kilt, or else come back here totin' a cannon ball inside of 'im, it'll be because de young marster beats mo' sense into dat cymlin head o' his'n dan he's got in dar now!"

"What 'pon de face o' de yearth is you talkin' 'bout, Gyawge!" exclaimed the old woman, arresting her bandanna in mid air and gazing in indignant astonishment at her lord. "Is you done los' what little sense you is got? Did de young marster ever beat a suck-aig dog, let 'lone his ole mammy's own born chile!"

"Oh, dry up, ole 'oman," said the old man, remonstratingly; "don't you talk 'bout beaten 'sense into fokeses heads an' den say it's a figger o' speech?"

"Well, sposin I does! what bisness has you to be flingin' your figgers o' speech at dem blessed lams, an' maby we won't never see nary one of 'em no mo'—*no mo'!*" And the old woman covered her face with the bandanna, and burst into audible sobs as the party passed out of sight.

"Well, fokes," said Uncle George, knowing how easily the chords of sympathy are made to vibrate in the breasts of his impressible race, and fearing a scene with mammy

as the leader of the mourners, “dey is all out o’ sight an’ its no use to be moanin’ an’ groanin’. We’s all in de hans o’ de good Lawd, an’ He watches even de sparrers when dey falls. Dar mus’ be wars an’ rumors o’ war ; an’ fokes will fite an’ kill one another till de merlenium comes ! Death is in de a’r, an’ de smell o’ death is on de breeze ! De rivers may run wid blood, an’ de sun an’ de moon an’ de stars may rain down blood, but dem dat lives has got to eat an’ wear close all de same. An’ for dem de good Lawd will make de sun to keep on a shinin’, de rains to keep on a fallin’, an’ de fruits o’ de yearth to keep on a growin’ ; bless His holy name ! An’ dat minds me dat de grass an’ weeds is a growin’ now, an’ we a standin’ here idle all de day ; so lets ‘ forrard march ’ es Dick says, po’ boy ! an go to killin grass an’ weeds ; an’ I speck dat’s a heap safer an’ profitabler a bisness dan killen’ dem abolitioners ; dod-blast ’em to dingnation !”

This outlandish oath was Uncle George’s one besetting sin. Often had he promised mammy that it should never pass his lips again, and its use had become so unusual, and the old man had become so dignified, devotional and even-tempered, that its indulgence never failed to excite the ever-alert risibles of the young folks. On the present occasion, many sly winks and snickers were indulged in at the old man’s expense as the soldiers of peace prepared to renew the onslaught upon the weeds and tares. They were not sentimental philanthropists of the reformed and improved Plymouth Rock pattern, and had never asked themselves why the lusty pests should not be suffered to appropriate all that they could get of the abundant fatness of the earth and the free sunlight of heaven.

Mr. Stewart, after spending a few days at his old home, proceeded to Richmond, where he found that Captain

Howard's company had become one of the integers to form the Ninth Alabama regiment, and had been sent to General Joseph E. Johnston, at Winchester. Repairing immediately to that point, he enlisted "for three years, or the war," and assumed the regular duties of a soldier.

A close inspection of the situation was saddening to the young man in the extreme. Passion at the North had attained a white heat, and all opposition to "the supreme will of the people" was as feathery down in a fiery furnace. Even sober-sided business men, merchants and manufacturers, whose sensibilities could be reached only through the "pocket nerve," joined the hue and cry. There was method in the madness of the hour. It was the purpose of the new Confederacy to establish a tariff for revenue only, and the petted and pampered industrial "infants" of the North fancied they saw ruin staring them in the face if the South should be changed from a liberal and easy-going customer to a powerful rival in the marts of the world, with her ports free of any unnecessary restrictions upon trade. Their imaginations painted Norfolk as the successful rival of New York, and Charleston of Boston, while New Orleans sat as the future Queen City of the Continent, waving the golden sceptre of commercial supremacy, and those who had never known the poison of fanaticism became, if possible, even more angry than the fanatics! A sudden and fierce love for the South developed itself, and they determined to hug the "clog to the nation" to their fond bosoms, even though their embrace should entail death. They solemnly recalled to mind the long-forgotten affection for the Southern sisters, "decrepit old Virginia," "senile Georgia," "the garrulous sisters Carolina" and "the young harlots tricked out in ancient finery;" and love for the "glorious

Union of the Fathers” came to know neither latitude nor longitude in their patriotic bosoms. But deep and sincere as was this newly-awakened love, the appalling financial prospect of the immediate future, to result from the expenditure of so many millions in bringing about a loving embrace, seemed likely to cool its ardor until adroit affection whispered into the ears of the bereaved: “The property of the rebels shall pay for the ‘fatted calf.’” This brilliant and characteristic suggestion gave a joyous ring to the cry of “On to Richmond,” gave new zest to the paroxysm of patriotism on the part of the press, and caused the masses to hug themselves with joy at the discovery of a balm for all possible hurts.

As the young man fully realized the position of affairs, and saw how entirely unprepared, in adequate means and equipments, his people were for the vigorous and gigantic plans and preparations on the other side, his heart sank within him. But the time had come for action, and he joined the half-armed mob of citizen-soldiers, with a thrill of enthusiasm such as can never be known in the full extent of its maddening joy save to him who joins a forlorn hope to do deeds of reckless and almost hopeless daring.

On the day of his arrival in Winchester, he found the town in a perfect furor of excitement. Every few moments farmer’s boys came dashing into the town on mules or plow-horses, some of them, in the hot haste of extreme alarm, using their felt hats to quicken the speed of their blundering chargers, bringing the news that Patterson was rapidly advancing with an army “ten miles long!” Old men seized fowling-pieces and went to “the front,” only a couple of miles distant, while boys ran up and down the streets offering all their worldly wealth for “anything that will shoot.”

On the next morning, orders were issued at camp to prepare three days rations, and before twelve o'clock the little army, to the great surprise of themselves and the citizens, had turned their backs on Patterson and his "ten miles" of troops—leaving them to the tender mercies of the frightened plow-boys, angry old men and enthusiastic urchins still hunting for "anything that will shoot;" and soon were double-quicking through Ashby's gap of the Blue Ridge on their way to reinforce Beauregard's position, near Manassas Junction, which was about to be attacked by McDowell.

As the little force made their way, silently and swiftly, through the defiles of the mountain, those whom they were to oppose were moving forward, forty miles or more away, with fierce shouts of exuberant valor and patriotic songs and hymns, one of the latter having the remarkable refrain :

"John Brown's body lies mouldering in the ground,
But his soul is marching on!
Oh, Glory, Hallelujah! Oh, Glory, Hallelujah!
His soul is marching on!" *

While in their rear followed wagons loaded with wines and supplies for a grand "blow out"—as Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, styled it—in Richmond, and carriages filled with congressmen, governors of states and female representatives of the society then uppermost at Washington, carrying opera glasses, to give them a view, from a safe distance, of the real drama—named a little too soon—"The Crushing of the Slave-Holding Power."

* Letter of Mr. Russell, war correspondent of London Times; issue of Oct. 19th, 1861: That impious hymn was heard in every part of the South as the favorite of a class in every Federal army.



"On to Richmond" under Difficulties.

Dick trotted along by the side of the young master, "walking up hill and footing it down;" and as he saw him, with blistered feet, wading the cool streams or kicking up the dust, with an ancient, smooth-bore musket, altered from a flint to a percussion, one of the few thousands of similar arms which constituted the celebrated "steal" (liar's vernacular) of ex-Secretary of War, John B. Floyd, he devoutly wished for the bays and phaeton, or Selim, or even one of the "shave-tailed mules."

"Mars' Chyarles," he said, as they walked up a long hill, amid suffocating dust, "ef I gits kilt I wants you to find me, 'cause I'se got a letter for you; but if I don't git kilt you kin lemme 'lone."

"What?" inquired the young man, stopping to pant a moment, "a letter! From whom?"

"Well, sar, mammy an' marmsell sorter fixed it up betwixt 'em."

"Where is it?"

"Sowed up in de bres' o' dis buckskin jacket. But you ain't to have it onless I gits kilt."

"But suppose *I* get killed," laughed the young man, "how about the letter then?"

"Well, ef you gits kilt I'se to take you to ole miss here in Ferginny; or ef you's ever in a mighty tight place for money, me or you ary one is to bust it open."

"Has it money in it?"

"Lawd! No, sir! Nary cent!"

"Well, what about money?"

"Dar ain't no money in it, but I's to tell you nothin' 'cept ef I gits kilt you git dat letter; an' ef I don't git kilt you's to lemme 'lone. Dem's my orders, sar; an' es de sayin' goes, 'ef you ax me no queshtons I'll tell you no lies.'"

On arriving, with blistered feet, weary limbs and dust-covered body, at Piedmont, on the Manasses Junction and Strasburg railroad, where the infantry were to take the cars for the Junction, it occurred to the young man that, with the insufficient means of transportation at hand, many precious hours must elapse before his regiment, coming in its regular order, could be transported. He, therefore, disregarding the requirements of military discipline, the absolute necessity of which he had not yet fully recognized, determined to go on in advance of his command, and found sitting room on top of a coach of the last train that went through before the collision, which stopped all transportation till the next day, and kept many a gallant fellow gazing, for long, weary hours, down the track in anxious watch for the next train, while with nervous impatience he listened to the far distant boom of heavy guns, which he knew were doing slaughter and "making history."

As the train was in the act of moving off with all sitting, standing and hanging-on space fully occupied, Dick's voice—he had been ordered to remain with the regiment—was heard above the din, as he gesticulated wildly from the top of a pile of goods boxes, in a frantic effort to attract the young master's attention.

"I say, Mars' Chyarles, dar's a man in de grocery here dat's got a ole sode widout no sheth to it, an' he says I may have it for seben dollars. Mayn't I buy it?"

But the laughing reply of the young man was lost in a perfect Bedlam of shouts from the crazy, laughing, yelling mob on the cars as the train moved off.

"Bully for you, Snowball!"

"Get a hay-fork. Red Jacket!"



"It 'pears like dis is gwine to be a mighty po' war, anyhow!"

“Snatch up a grubin’-hoe, Jack o’ Clubs.”

“Grab a meat-axe, Othello!”

“Skirmish around and find a mowin’-blade, Black Hawk!” etc., etc.

“Humph!” grunted Dick, indignantly, as he climbed down from his perilous perch, still keeping his eager eyes on the fast-disappearing, and madly-yelling mass of reckless, devil-may-care humanity. “Who ever hyeard of anybody skelpin’ a Abolitioner wid a mowin’-blade! It ’pears like dis is gwine to be a mighty po’ war, anyhow! Dar’s es big a gent’man es Mars’ Chyarles totin’ a ole yawger ’roun’ dat a nigger wouldn’t be ketched wid in Alabamer; an’ half de tother white fokes ain’t got nothin’ but shot-guns an’ shop-made butcher knives; an’ I ’spose ef a nigger wants to take a han’, he’s got to skirmish aroun’ an’ hunt up de farmin’ tools! Humph!”

History has related how the passengers on that last train on that quiet Sabbath day, as they approached the vicinity of the battle-field, halted the train short of its destination,* and hastily forming, dashed over hill and dale, through forests, fields and bramble, directly to the point from which the heaviest roar of the conflict seemed to proceed; and how they came, Blucher-like, at the eleventh hour, to inspire the thin lines of weary and fainting patriots with renewed energy, and to join in the last desperate charge which was destined to crumble, disintegrate and sweep away the last grand array of their opponents, and send them, huddled and confused, to the rear in a hasty retreat, which was soon to become a wild and disastrous rout. Mr. Stewart had taken the position of a

* It is here asserted that the thought to do this did not originate with any one officer, but was a spontaneous impulse or inspiration on the part of all the passengers, officers, and privates.

volunteer color-guard, and a short time after General Kirby Smith, the leader, had been shot down—as then believed mortally wounded by a ball through the lungs—a discharge of grape-shot, at short range, had brought down the color sergeant and a dozen or more around him. But the colors had hardly touched the ground before the young volunteer, who was unhurt, wrenched them from the dying grasp of the sergeant, and springing to the front bore them through the remainder of the fight, and in the short pursuit which the thoroughly exhausted command was able to make, as soldiers, congressmen, governors, and women, abandoning artillery, champagne baskets, pie wagons, and puff boxes, choked the roads for twenty miles, or scattered frantically through fields and forests in a mad effort to escape from —— What? “Raw Head and Bloody Bones!” for there was virtually nothing else possessing the ability to pursue.

On the next day, when his own command arrived, Mr. Stewart displayed to the covetous eyes of his comrades a bright new Enfield rifle, which he had secured for himself in the general rush after the battle for the abandoned arms; and made Dick cut up rare capers of joy, by presenting him a new cavalry sabre with a highly polished “sheth.”

“Golly! Mars’ Chyarles,” exclaimed the delighted “abolitioner skelper,” as he passed the flat side of the polished steel caressingly across his cheek, “ef we all ain’t got no shiny guns an’ sodes, we knows whar to git ’em cheap, don’t we? Did we get all de cannons, too?”

“We got a very large lot of them,” replied the young man, laughing at the negro’s manifestations of joy. “Do you want a cannon also?”

“Lawd, no sar! But I wants our side to have ’em all,

so dey can't be shootin' 'em at us. Daddy says he bet I'd be buttin' billy-goats wid some o' dem cannon balls, an' es hard es my head is de cannon balls 'ud be apt to git de best o' it, an' I's sorter feard so myself."

What a momentous battle was that first of Manassas ! or "Bull Run," as it has been styled in history by men who would scorn to be suspected of having intended to perpetuate a pun. What a lucky defeat for those who lost it ! What an unfortunate victory for those who won ! It cleared the vision of the former and dazzled the eyes of the latter. It taught one the unreliability of the alleged aphorism that "two are better than one," and deceived the other with the belief that "one is equal to three !" Dick, catching the spirit of the hour, felt that the simple shout of the rebel yell from a hundred throats could put to flight a brigade with banners ; and even the young master viewed with less apprehension the gigantic preparations being made the succeeding winter on the North side of the Potomac, and the self-satisfied apathy, or rather absence of vigorous activity, in the South.

In the early spring of the next year, while the country was full of rumors of an intended advance by "the finest army on the planet" on the position at Manassas, the command to which Mr. Stewart belonged was hurried from its winter camp near the stream known as Bull Run, to go, by quick marches, through Richmond and on to the gateway of the new route, which indications pointed to as the chosen one for the second move in the "on to Richmond" international chess tournament. In the rifle pits near Yorktown he found less than eleven thousand troops holding a defensive line extending from that historic burgh to the James river ; while marshalled in front of them were three army corps embracing ninety

thousand infantry, ten thousand cavalry, and largely over four hundred field and siege guns.

On the promotion of Captain Howard to a field office, Mr. Stewart had been appointed to the vacant lieutenancy occasioned by the company promotions made necessary in order to fill the vacant captaincy, and being unable to procure a sword of any description, he had made a requisition on Dick for the sabre, giving him the Enfield rifle in exchange. As this rifle was the only improved arm in the regiment, and was consequently the envy of the eight hundred men in the command, Dick made the exchange very gladly, only objecting that the bayonet might be "sort o' onhandy to skelp a abolitioner ef he was 'live.'"

The great necessity of keeping up a good show of forces along so lengthy a line of defense till additional troops could arrive from Manassas, necessitated the hasty formations of special battalions, to compose which many large companies were subdivided into platoons. One of these latter was put under the command of Mr. Stewart, and he was sent to occupy a long narrow peninsula jutting out into the salt marsh which, for some distance, excepting at the point of the peninsula, lined that side of the Warwick river or creek. He was given two couriers, with orders to open fire, and send a courier with tidings, if the enemy should be heard to come down to the margin of the stream during the darkness of night. And in case of an attempt to throw a force across he was ordered to despatch the other courier, and to fight till reinforced, or as long as he had a man alive.

The shades of deep twilight, under cover of which he moved into his position, had not given place to full darkness for more than a couple of hours, when the cracking

of twigs under foot, and the occasional click of a canteen against the handle of a bayonet, told of the cautious advance of the foe down the face of the wooded heights to the margin of the narrow stream whose tide had commenced an hour before to ebb. The men, who had already made considerable progress in opening rifle pits by the lively use of bayonets and tin cups, in the absence of picks and spades, instantly seized their guns, and when it was discovered that the head of the column had reached the margin of the water, the instantaneous roar of forty-two “steal” muskets burst upon the fog-laden air, hushing the busy croakings of millions of frogs, and awaking the slumbering echoes from the opposite heights. For several moments there was an absence of all sound upon the air, and it seemed to the few poetic fancies present in the little band as if nature had paused to listen for the next demonstration. But there was dead silence on the opposite side. Not even the cracking of a twig or the click of a canteen vouchsafed a feeble response to the uproarious salute. Soon, however, the ring of forty-two rammers, loading the rusty “steal” guns, broke the oppressive stillness, and for more than an hour an irregular and scattering fire was kept up without eliciting any response from the other side; till finally a voice came across the fog-shrouded water:

“What in the h—ll are you Johnny Rebs shootin’ at?”

“Lieutenant,” drawled a loose-jointed hero of many a fisticuff bout in the Alabama Barrens, “mayn’t I open on him?” and having received laughing and unconsidered permission, he responded:

“Shootin’ at you d—d red-mouthed, blue bel—d Abolitionists.”

"Have you got balls in your guns?"

"No; we're tryin' to run you home without hurtin' you!"*

"Good boy! Who's in command over there?"

"Me!"

"What's your name?"

"Col. Thomas Wild Cat!"

"What regiment?"

"Wait over there a spell and I'll send the army bullet-in!"

"Oh, I'm not seeking light through a hole in my body!"

"Ha! ha! you're no fool if you are a Yank. What's your name?"

"Maj. Gen. Bengal Tiger!"

"Happy to know you, Tige. Hope you mayn't live long and prosper!"

"Many thanks! Sorry I can't call over this evening and give you the strong grip of the Tiger's paw!"

"Mighty sorry myself! I'd show you how I'd keep the flesh on my bones long enough to see the acacia wave over your head!"

"Ha! ha! Wild Tom Cat, my boy, you'll do! Say! I want to come over there. What kind of welcome will you fellows give me?"

"The kind you fellows wanted the Mexicans to give our Southern boys when we went to whip the sassy greasers, and make glory for that durned old flag that you've got over there!"

"Oh, you don't want to talk like that about the old

* This is a real conversation, given from memory, under the circumstances exactly as here described.

flag! You boys helped to make its glory, and we only want you to keep your share. That's fair, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes; we understand all that! You want all the stars for your share, and want to give us all the stripes for ours. But we've soured on stripes, and the old shebang 'll be red all over, and the stars 'll weep blood before you can fix it that way again!"

"Oh, I'm no politician, and couldn't make a buncombe speech like that to save me! But we don't want you to destroy the life of the nation!"

"Destroy what? Well, that's cool! You've been sayin' for years that we were a set of lazy drones and a clog to you prosperity, and now talk about pegging out because we want to leave you in peace and let you prosper."

"But you insulted the flag at Sumter!"

"Well, what of it? We made it what it is, and gave it the spirit to know when it is insulted. But we wouldn't have done it if you fellows hadn't flirted it into our faces and dared us to bat our eyes. All the use you ever had for it before was as a sort o' sign over your tradin' ships, to let the nations know if they weren't on their p's and q's, that we Southern boys would thrash 'em out o' their boots. It's mighty little glory you've ever spangled on to it!"

"Oh, well," responded the other, with a quiet laugh, "if we have been a little backward heretofore, we are going to make up for all that now."

"Yes; that's just like you. You can't fight a foreign enemy for the honor of the flag—you'd rather stay at home and supply the market with wooden nutmegs—but the good fat thing that you've been makin' out of us you want to hold on to like grim death to a dead nigger!"

“Ha! ha! Wild Cat, my boy, you’re a regular fire-eater! I can see your eyes shining!”

“Of course you can; so get out of the way; I’m going to shoot!”

“Oh, don’t do that! You can’t hurt anything but the frogs in the marsh; and I want to ask you about a lot of things. Besides, it’s contrary to the usage of civilized warfare for pickets to fire on each other.”



“Where are the Rebels?”

“We’re not conducting a civilized warfare! We’re fighting you ‘higher-law’ fellows who believe in higher things than are recognized by laws, and practice lower ones; who recognize a higher leader than your gallant McClellan, and follow the lead of John Brown’s so-called soul. Only savages could be led by the spirit of such a human brute; so look out! I’m going to shoot! Fair warning! One, two, three!” And the report of the old “steal” musket, held at an angle of twelve or

fifteen degrees, to insure against hurting the frogs, rang out on the air and the soldier prudently lay down in his shallow rifle pit.

On the next night, and on each succeeding night, the same voice called over for a little chat ; but Mr. Stewart, fearing that some hint of the position of affairs might be unwittingly dropped by his men, forbade any response to be made. This order severely tried the military discipline of the irrepressible Barrenite, particularly when reference was made to his feeding on wild onions and sassafras tea, with a little bacon and corn-meal, and an occasional frog from the marsh. It is only the truth that gives umbrage to the feelings, and poor Shelton, while suffering the pangs of hunger, could illy brook the sarcasms fired at his government's larder.

In the meantime troops from Manassas were arriving daily ; and on the opposite side it was very evident an immense army had been massed, and that the pick and spade had turned the hills upside down with great earth-works, while innumerable masked batteries lined the heights for miles, behind the forest growth which covered the faces of the precipitous slopes.

CHAPTER XVI.

GRIM-VISAGED WAR.

*"Ah! me! what perils do environ
The man that meddles with cold iron."*—BUTLER'S HUDIBRAS.

*"He is unwise that to a market goes
Where there is nothing to be had but blows."*—ALEYN'S HENRY VII.

ONE pleasant evening, after night had drawn a veil between the sharp-shooters on the Warwick Heights and their targets on the little peninsula, who, but for the one Enfield rifle, borrowed of Dick, would have been completely at the mercy of their foes, a loud-voiced song was heard from the bald hill immediately in rear of Mr. Stewart's position, reciting the adventures of a colored couple in a disastrous buggy ride, which, judging from the refrain, placed the lady in a rather undignified position :

*"Old Joe kickin' up behind an' befo',
De yaller gal kickin' up behind old Joe."*

This rude song thrilled the heart of the young commandant of the perilous post, as it had never been thrilled by the most intoxicating music of an Italian opera, for it foretold the coming of Dick, with his breakfast, dinner and supper, all in one.

Dick had acquired, in his command, the sobriquet of "*colored* sergeant," from his persistence in claiming as his right a place in the line of march immediately in rear of the battle flag, and from his frequent reference to deeds

of gallantry performed while acting as color-bearer at Manasses by—he was not sure whether it was himself or the young master, or both together. On the present occasion he marched gallantly forward, proud of a “treat” he had provided for the young master, with a rough basket, fabricated by himself out of hickory bark, on his arm, and a “little brown jug” in one hand. The dinginess of his buckskin jacket, and two embrasures in the rear of his pants, from one of which floated, as if at half-mast, a checked signal of distress, indicated that he had seen hard service; but his unsubdued mein told that he was “right side up,” with “a heart for every fate.” In addition to his proud military title, he had won a prouder, and equally well-merited, literary distinction, that of being poet-laureate to Company “F.” As he neared the post, and knew that his voice could be heard by the men on duty, he changed his song to one of his own composition—his latest:

“Buckwheat flour battercakes an’ ’possum fat is good,
An’ ’lasses to go wid ’em—I’d git it ef I could;
Roasted shote an’ ’tater sass will take a nigger’s hat,
But ef you want his gizzard, give ’im cakes an’ ’possum fat!
Oh! Lawd, mammy, watch ole Uncle Sam,
Keep your eye upon de meat dat’s fryin’ in de pan!

“Fat hog meat is gettin’ sca’ce, an’ ’tother meat is gone;
De biskits dat me’s chawin’ on is made out o’ co’n.
Little pone o’ co’n ashcake an’ little chunk o’ fat,
An’ every day is Sunday when we gits enough o’ dat.
Oh! Lawd, mammy, look at Uncle Sam,
Eatin’ all de rashens up, an’ soppin’ o’ de pan!”

Mr. Stewart met his faithful purveyor at the upper end of the little copse that lay to the rear of his post, and praised him as a famous forager when he produced his treat of “sassafax tea sweetened wid sorghum ’lasses,” and

a fine large fish, a present from Captain Flournoy, in addition to the usual scant ration of corn bread and "Nassau" bacon. While the young man regaled himself on this sumptuous fare, Dick sauntered down to the post to deliver a message. He had been there but a few minutes when the voice, which seemed never to weary of making witty and taunting inquiries or suggestions, called:

"Hello, over there, Wild Tom Cat. Can't you invite me over to tea—safras tea?"

Receiving no answer, it soon came again:

"I say, Tom Cat, I thought I heard the name of Stewart over there. Have you got a fellow named Stewart with you?"

"*Feller* named Styode!" quoted Dick, indignantly. "He means me. He wouldn't have de imperdence to call Mars' Chyarles a '*feller*.' I's gwine to ax him to let me jaw dat *feller*. I speck I kin fling es much slack jaw es he kin."

Saying which, he ran off, and soon returned with the information to the sergeant that he had the desired permission, under certain restrictions; and going to the edge of the water, he called:

"Who's dat wants to hear 'bout a *feller* named Styode?"

"Me! Do you know him?" replied the voice, with animation.

"Well, I wears his britches and totes his munny-puss."

"Are you Mr. Stewart?"

"Dat's what dey calls me when I's at home."

"Are you an officer?"

"You bet! I's de colored sudgent!"

"Are you acquainted in Barrensville, Alabama?"

“Barrensville ! I knows every ole rooster dat ever crowed in Barrensville !”

“Do you know Dr. Hansel ?”

“Dr. Hansel ! I wish I had es many dollars es I knows dat ole rooster !”

There was a pause here, and a consultation seemed to be held on the other side, interspersed with a good deal of laughter. Finally the voice came again :

“Mr. Stewart are you not a contraband ?”

“No ; I’s got nothin’ to do wid no ban’ but I’s de poit-lawrit.

“I mean are you not a colored brother ?”

“Well, I dunno ’bout dat ! I’s a nigger, an’ I won’t ’spute ’bout bein’ a brother ; but whether I’s culled or you is bleached I hasn’t adzackly made up my min’. But we’s all one fambly.”

“What are *you* doing in the army ?”

“I’s de colored sudgent, an’ de poit-lawrit, an’ I cooks for Mars’ Chyarles Styode :”

“Charles Stewart from Alabama ?”

“Yes, an’ a mighty long ways from dar, too !”

“He’s the man we want ! Where is he ?”

“Back yonder, settin’ on a camp sofy, eatin’ of a poun’ cake, an’ drinkin’ Chiny tea !”

“Is he an officer ?”

“Well, you’d think so ef you was to see dat fine sode he’s a totin’ round’.”

“Tell him Captain Frank Conrad is over here, and ask him if he will receive a visit from him.”

“No ; no !” excitedly ; “tell him to shinny on his own side o’——”

“Stop, Dick,” exclaimed Mr. Stewart, who came up at the moment ; “say that I shall be happy to do so.”

“But, Mars’ Chyarles,” remonstrated Dick, “sposen dey brings de guns an’ we gits up a skrimmage? Dar powder shoots a heap harder’n ourn, an’——” but before Dick could finish his sentence, a clear, manly voice called out :

“Hello, Stewart ! Are you over there ? ” And the young man, recognizing the voice of his friend, and Miss Seymour’s cousin, Frank Conrad, gave him a cordial invitation to come over.

In a few moments the bottom of a small skiff grated upon the gray sand, and a tall athletic young man sprang ashore. While the two officers exchanged cordial greetings, Dick’s peering vision penetrated the murky darkness sufficiently to satisfy him that the two men left in the boat had oars instead of guns in their hands. After many inquiries concerning mutual friends, Mr. Stewart directed Dick to serve up the remainder of his “poun’ cake and Chiny tea,” and invited his friend to “head-quarters” to partake of those dainties. Dick served pipes and tobacco, instead of the edible luxuries, with the apology, intended for effect on the stranger, and showing a trace of his license as a poet-laureate :

“Mars’ Chyarles, dar must be stray dogs runnin’ loose in dese woods, an’ a heap of ’em too, for I can’t find nary morsel of nothin’ t’ eat, nor drink, ’ceptin’ dat fine simmon brandy Mars’ Cap’n Flournoy sont you yistiddy.”

“Well, Dick,” laughed the young man, “serve that in your best style. If a civilized palate cannot stand it there will at least be a novel gustatory sensation when persimmon brandy is tasted for the first time.”

The two friends chatted pleasantly for hours over their pipes and the fiery liquor made from that indigenous fruit which Captain Smith, the hero of the Pocahontas rescue,

describes as a peculiar “plum, with several seeds, called *putchemons* by the Indians ; good for food, but, if eaten green, is liable to gripe the g—s.” As the alcoholic spirit made from this peculiar “plum” did not possess the peculiar qualities attributed to the green fruit by the first white hero known to Virginia, the young men drank numerous healths and toasts ; and the Pleiades, those seven wrinkles in the neck of Taurus, which are the negroes’ time-keepers of the night, told Dick that it was less than an hour to daybreak when the entertaining young visitor arose to depart.

“Well, Stewart,” said he, “I must leave now. To-morrow night I shall send the boat over for you, if circumstances do not prevent, and shall invite some of my brother officers to meet you. In the mean time, I shall write a letter to that charming little cousin of mine, who so heartlessly gave me the mitten two years ago, and shall get you to mail it inside of your lines.”

As he finished speaking, he wrote a few lines in a notebook, and tearing the leaf out, he handed it to Mr. Stewart, with the remark :

“This is to remind you. Read it in the morning, and do not fail to be ready for the boat. And you are to bring Dick, too. We have but one Abolitionist over there for him to scalp—our sutler—and he has been scalping us so long that we shall enjoy seeing him beaten at his own game.”

After escorting his friend to the boat, and taking leave of him, with the promise to visit him on the next night, if possible, the young man wrapped himself in his blanket, and soon fell asleep.

The sun was shining in his face the next morning when he awoke, and his first thought was the note left him by

Captain Conrad. He was a little disappointed, as well as startled, when he opened it and read :

“Useless butchery is not war! If I do not send the boat for you, listen for the sound of axes unmasking batteries. If you hear it, flee instantly from the wrath to come!”

Mr. Stewart had believed for several days that powerful batteries were being erected along the half moon line of cliffs that fronted and flanked his position, and knowing that his men could not live twenty minutes under the fire that might be directed on them from even one well-manned battery, he visited battalion headquarters for the purpose of getting some modification of his orders. He found Major Howard without authority to make the desired modification, and feeling that it would not be proper for him to divulge the intimation given him, of course only for his own personal use and information, he returned to his post, and after dark put his men earnestly to work, with bayonets and tin cups, to deepen their pits. But as he passed from one to another, urging unceasing work, and listening to the faint murmur of unusual bustle on the other side mingled with the rumbling of heavy wheels, a courier arrived from battalion headquarters bringing orders for him to repair thither immediately with his full command. On arriving at the place, he found the camp fires burning as usual, but only a courier was there awaiting him with orders as to the route he should pursue to join his battalion. As he paused for a few minutes to gather items of news, or of surmise, from the courier, and heard the distant rumbling of the wagons and artillery of his own army, he saw that the movement, whatever it might be, was a general one. And, as he heard the sound of axes from the fog-veiled cliffs beyond the narrow channel, where gaunt malaria brooded over

the silent marshes, and fiery death lurked behind the beetling cliffs, he smiled to think how the shrieking shot and shell would probably rend and demolish the deserted copse which had given him friendly shelter.

Throughout the entire night the line of march was pursued, the only command being: “Close up, boys; we will rest to-morrow;” and just at sunrise the battalion emerged from a forest into a large field, in which were two newly-constructed redoubts about half a mile from the old town of Williamsburg. Already the field was tolerably well filled with soldiers, some cooking and eating, others smoking and chatting, but by far the majority enjoying, in profound slumber, the rest so much needed by all. Here Major Howard was informed that when the march should be resumed, his special battalion would occupy the position of the rearmost of the rear guard, and that consequently his men would have five full hours for rest.

After a long and much-needed nap, Mr. Stewart was aroused by the roll of his battalion drum, and sprang to his feet to find the field deserted, except by his own battalion, and a few stragglers here and there, who had overslept, and were eagerly inquiring the direction taken by their comrades.

As the command ascended the long hill on the road leading to the town, a courier, who had come out of the forest, now over half a mile to the rear, dashed by without deigning to notice the many witty and sarcastic remarks that were fired at him from the ranks. The battalion had entered the little town, and finding all the balconies, doors and windows filled with ladies, greeting them pleasantly, had joined, with one accord, in the melodious strains of Dixie, when a second courier, coming from the rear, dashed by. To the shouts from the ranks. “Don’t run,

Bud; we'll not let 'em hurt you!" "What's skeerin you, Long Legs?" etc., the courier only shouted, with an earnestness never known to him who bore the "banner with a strange device,"—"Where's General Johnston?" In the midst of shouts of information: "Fifteen miles ahead, tryin' to overtake the cavalry." "Over in the next county, huntin' up the Buttermilk Rangers," etc., a staff officer came dashing down the street at full speed, and shouted the command, as he passed: "Right about and double quick!" At the same moment a shell, which had traveled a long distance, as the sound of the gun which sent it had not been noticed, burst in the air on the outskirts of the village. In an instant everything was changed. As the men wheeled in their tracks, and set out on the double-quick, the musical strains of Dixie swelled into the wild, discordant shout, which had already become famous as the "Rebel yell;" ladies screamed and wept, alternately wringing and clapping their hands, while a few, more impulsive than the majority, ran out on the pavements, and, waving handkerchiefs, scarfs and sun-bonnets, added a musical mite to the hoarse roar from the masculine throats.

Soon a cry came from the rear: "Clear the way for the artillery!" and the rushing mass drifted to the left as a battery of four guns with their caissons, drawn by six and four horses respectively, came lumbering and thundering down the street at a full gallop. As the guns mounted the elevation east of the town, a battery of six guns belonging to the foe dashed out of the forest on the other side of the field already described, and bent their swift course toward the same redoubt that was the objective point of the Confederates. Then commenced an exciting race, with the advantages, so far as distance and



“Where’s General Johnson?”

a smooth way were concerned, in favor of the foe. A staff officer, riding at furious speed, dashed up to the Confederate battery, and shouted : “ Drive into the redoubt ! Lock wheels, and fight ’em with your rammers till the infantry get there ! ” But the wild shouts of the thirty-two cannoners and twenty drivers, as the latter furiously lashed and spurred their forty horses, told of the resolution that had been formed before the command was given.

Leaving the road, which made a sweep to the right, the drivers dashed in a straight line, diagonally down the incline, for the redoubt ; through thickets of brush-wood, and over half-rotted stumps, and stones and gullies, that it seemed, considering the speed at which they were moving, should have appalled the hearts of any human creatures not entirely daft from excitement. Just at the moment that the battery left the road the infantry mounted the elevation from which they could see the exciting race, and cheer after cheer rent the air, as the ponderous guns floundered along, like unwilling dogs, being dragged by chains, swaying from side to side, as, in crossing gullies diagonally, first one wheel and then the opposite one would plunge half out of sight and spring aloft, scattering showers of red earth, and spinning for an instant free of contact with the ground. Every moment one looked to see the gunners hurled, like mortar shells, from their seats, or the misleap of a horse bring all to instant wreck. But the opposing battery, probably appalled by such reckless driving, and seeing that, if the race were continued, it would result in a hand to hand struggle at the redoubt, gave up the contest ; and sweeping around in a graceful curve they formed the battery, hastily unlimbered, and delivered their first fire as the Confederate

guns dashed into the redoubt. The rapid firing and bursting of shells from the Federal battery made a quick tattoo, to which the Confederate gunners seemed to dance like metallic puppets operated by electricity, as they unlimbered, loaded and delivered their fire before the lively drivers could rush their horses out of and behind the earthwork.

But, instead of firing at the opposing battery, they sent their shells into the woods to demoralize a blue line of infantry, which could be seen rapidly forming for a charge. The Federal battery instantly adopted the same idea, and training their guns upon the howling mob, racing pell-mell down the hill, as if on a general sweepstakes race, or in mad chase after a hare, and looking very unlike the soldierly battalion which only twenty minutes before had marched up the hill, they sent shot and shell screaming overhead, digging pitfalls under foot, and occasionally hurling an individual or two from the moving mass.

“On the left, by file into line !” is the order given, and instantly military training, like kaleidoscopic magic, brings order out of chaos. A sergeant who is ahead springs to the left, brings his gun to a “present arms,” with his back to the approaching tide of humanity, and stands as rigid as a statue. He appears to act as a hook upon which the sweeping mass has caught. They whirl past him, but suddenly turning to the left and halting, an orderly line grows out from him, until the battalion is formed, as a tangled streamer is straightened out by the wind, with every man and officer in his proper place.

The order is given to lie down, and the battalion has been lying for a few minutes, with the shells passing above

them, when Dick crawls up to the young master, and says, in a half whisper :

“ Mars’ Chyarles, dar’s a man done jined our company, an’ he won’t lay down !”

“ What are you doing here, Dick ?” asked the young man, in surprise. “ Why didn’t you stay in the town ?”

“ Lawd, sar, I didn’t know whar to stay ! I thought de abolitioners was comin’ from de ’tother way, an’ we was runnin’ from ’em ; an’ I is all turned upside down. I do ’spise dem cannon balls,” he added, giving his head a sudden bump against the ground, as a shell burst twenty feet above him.

“ Where’s your gun ?” asked the young man, hardly able to restrain a laugh at the poor negro’s ludicrous gesture and vehement indignation.

“ Dat man—dar he comes now—said he was ’sleep, an’ his company lef’ ’im, an’ he gin me a dollar to len’ ’im my gun. Look at ’im ! Stan’in’ on his tip toes, tryin’ to git higher’n he is !”

Mr. Stewart turned to see a tall, slender man approaching slowly, and pausing every moment to stretch himself to his full height, and gaze over the slight intervening rise at the battery, which was sending its shell with such rapidity and accuracy.

“ *Guerre a mort ?*” he exclaimed to himself. “ *Ha ! C’est peu de chose !*”

“ My friend,” said Mr. Stewart, addressing him, “ what is the matter ?”

“ *Je ne sais quoi !*” he replied, without taking his eyes off the battery. “ *Je suis—vat you call him ?—bouleverse !*”

“ Mars’ Chyarles,” said Dick, volunteering as interpreter, “ he’s one o’ dese outlandish fokes, an’ is tryin’ to say, like dem abolitioner so’gers, ‘ Bully for me !’”

“What command do you belong to, sir?” inquired the young master.

“Le Louisiana battery,” replied the man, with his eyes still fixed on the battery of the foe.

“Well, I say!” exclaimed Mr. Stewart, in a tone that commanded attention. “You must lie down!”

“Eh? Lie down?” exclaimed the man, as he flashed an indignant glance at his interlocutor. “*Joci causa!* Ha! me fight under Napoleon—no afraid to die!”

“What is your name, sir?” demanded the young man.

“Cesare D’Elfons.”

“Eh! What? The deuce you say! Where are you from?”

“La belle Paris; sometime Nouvelle Orleans.”

“Were you a relative of old Monsieur Cesare D’Elfons, of New Orleans?”

“He vas my—vat you call him?—cousin.”

“I desire to see you as soon as this is over,” said the young man, impressively; “and now you must lie down, or I shall be under the necessity of ordering my men to take charge of you.”

“*Sans compliments—sans rime et sans raison!*” exclaimed the indignant man. “*Je ne com—ah! oui;—c’est America!*” and with an angry glance at the young man, he sat down upon the ground.

Glancing at Major Howard, who was afraid to dismount, lest, at the proper moment, he should find it difficult to remount his fiery and excited young steed, he exclaimed, as a shell burst near the horse’s head, causing him to rear and plunge fearfully:

“Ha! See Monsieur le Colonel! He is one brave man!”

This exclamation caused a burst of laughter at Mr.

Stewart's expense from those around, which was heartily enjoyed by those who did not know that the French never use the English indefinite article until they learn the language perfectly.

Before the laugh, in which Mr. Stewart joined amusedly, had subsided, Major Howard galloped along the line and exclaimed :

“ The infantry are about to charge, boys. Lie low and wait for the word. Recollect your guns are mere pop-crackers, and that steel is better than lead ! They want our battery, but we must have theirs ! ”

As the major spoke, a blue line, in beautiful dress-parade order, emerged from the woods, showing but little more force than might be in two good regiments. As they passed their battery, they seemed to become aroused, and raising a shout, broke into a double-quick. The Confederate battery commenced throwing grape and canister, and the celerity with which the guns were served, showed a full appreciation of their critical position. But the angry “ swish ” of the small missiles, as they mowed gaps through the advancing line seemed only to inspire to greater speed and determination.

Soon Major Howard called : “ Attention ! ” and in an instant every man was on his feet and the order given to advance. As the men sprang forward, a fragment of shell struck the major's horse in the head, causing him to rear and fall backward upon his rider, who, disengaging himself in a moment, rushed forward on foot with his naked sword, leaving the scabbard, as well as his hat and one of his coat skirts, under his dying steed. Before the short distance between the opposing forces could be covered, many a gallant fellow was sent “ off duty forever.” A fragment of shell struck the color-bearer in the face,

tearing away the greater part of one cheek, and bringing him to the earth. One of the guards instantly seized the colors, but as he raised them, the bearer clung to the staff, coming up with it; and snatching it away, ran forward with a shout, intended to say, "Hurrah, boys! Shelton isn't dead yet!" * but only an unintelligible and sickening jargon came from the ghastly grin which the missile of death had stamped forever upon his features.

But the men had not noticed the absence of their colors, for their eager gaze was fixed upon the proud banner which was being so gallantly borne against them, and whose silken folds, fluttered by a stiff breeze, reached out in front of the advancing masses, as if in an eager effort to reach across the "bloody chasm" opened by sectional hate and political wrong, and give glad, friendly greeting to the gallant spirits which, a few years before, would have sacrificed all but honor to protect it from the suspicion of a stain.

"Fire and give them the bayonet!" shouted the major; and the sound of nearly four hundred blunderbusses, and yells from as many throats, mingled with the din.

The advancing masses reel and stagger! a starry banner falls to a discharge of grape, which seemed almost to singe the whiskers of its gallant bearer! Friend and foe mingle and struggle for mastery for one brief moment, while the iron-throated monarchs of carnage are awed into silence! Amid the clash of steel, the shout, "Rally on the battery!" is heard. Blue and Gray commence a headlong race for the guns, but there is to be no rally for the Blue! To the rear is heard the hurried tramp of horses, and a squadron of cavalry, which has ridden five miles in twenty minutes, dashes upon the scene and winds up the skirmish with

* Color-Bearer William Shelton, Company F. 9th Ala. Reg't.

wild yells which they carry to, through and beyond the forest, till the angry roar of distant artillery commands a halt and compels a reconnoissance !

“ Boy ! ” angrily exclaimed a general officer, who had ridden ahead of his returning brigade, and was standing upon a parapet of the gallantly-defended redoubt, as he observed a youth, with his arm in a sling, who had returned from the pursuit, place his tattered boot under the staff of the prostrate banner and hurl it contemptuously from him, “ Boy ! How dare you ! Furl that banner, sir, and deliver it to your adjutant ! ”

While the youth was sullenly obeying the peremptory order, Dick came up, and after watching the operation until it was completed, he said, with a persuasive grin :

“ Boss, I’ll give you a silver dollar for dat flag.”

“ What do you want it for ? ” inquired the angry youth.

“ I wants it to sen’ my ole mammy for a bed-quilt. Mars’ Chyarles sent his ma one for a trophy or somethin’, an’ me an’ him is sorter pardners, you know.”

“ All right,” said the young scapegrace, glancing up to see that the general was no longer observing him ; “ but you must say that you captured it.”

“ Yes, sar ! ” agreed Dick, as he delivered the dollar, seized the banner, and ran forward to meet a squad of prisoners, with the cry :

“ Bless Gracious, ef dar ain’t Mars’ Cap’n Conrad ! Howdy do, Mars’ Cap’n ; has you seed Mars’ Chyarles ? ”

“ No,” replied the young captive officer, laughing, and shaking hands with the delighted negro, “ I’m a prisoner this time, Dick. Where is Stewart ? ”

“ I dunno’, sar. Out in de woods chasen’ you all’s fokes somewheres.”

“ Where did you get our banner ? ”

"Dis here flag? I done captured it, sar."

"What? Captured it? How?"

"Well, sah; I gin dat young boy in company 'A' a dollar for it."

"A new and dangerous method of attack upon the star-spangled banner," laughed the young officer. "Don't let the 'abolitioners' find it out, or we'll soon have no bunting left. By the by, have you scalped one yet?"

"No, sar; I ain't seed none yet."

"Why do you think so?"

"Cause our boys says dey don't fite, and dem I seed fit mighty savigrous."

"Well, Dick," laughed the young officer, as the corporal intimated that the squad must move on; "I see you are a very knowing fellow, and I shall ask you to do me a good turn. Deliver this letter to Stewart—he will understand—and as the corporal has been so modest as not to demand my sword you shall take it to your master to be worn in place of that 'fine' one he's a totin' aroun' till I capture him. Good-bye; here are several 'silver dollars' for you to drink my health on; but remember they are not to be used to capture a battery from the 'abolitioners.'"

"I always knowed," soliloquized Dick, as he delightedly scanned each silver coin, "dat Mars' Cap'n Conrad was a gent'man; same as ef he had bin borned in Alabamer, or in ole Ferginny hitself."

When the battalion returned to the redoubt to collect up the wounded who were not unable to march, they were ordered to take up the line of march, and to camp for the night five miles beyond Williamsburg. As they ascended the hill, they met General Longstreet and staff, returning with his corps, to the scene of the skirmish, to hold three army corps in check for the next forty hours, and to

teach them, in a bloody battle on the next day, the terrible force that may be given to a back-handed blow.

As the battalion passed through the little town, still meeting Longstreet's people, Dick was discovered investing a part of his wealth in ginger-cakes, which were being counted into his hat, and the ranks immediately opened on him :

"Fall in, colored sargeant !"

"Unbuckle yourself from that sword, Red Jacket !"

"Crawl out from under that banner, Black Hawk !"

"Bless Gracious !" ejaculated Dick, gathering his hat and cakes under his unoccupied arm ; "ef dar ain't we-all ! Where's Mars' Chyarles ?" he inquired, running to meet the command.

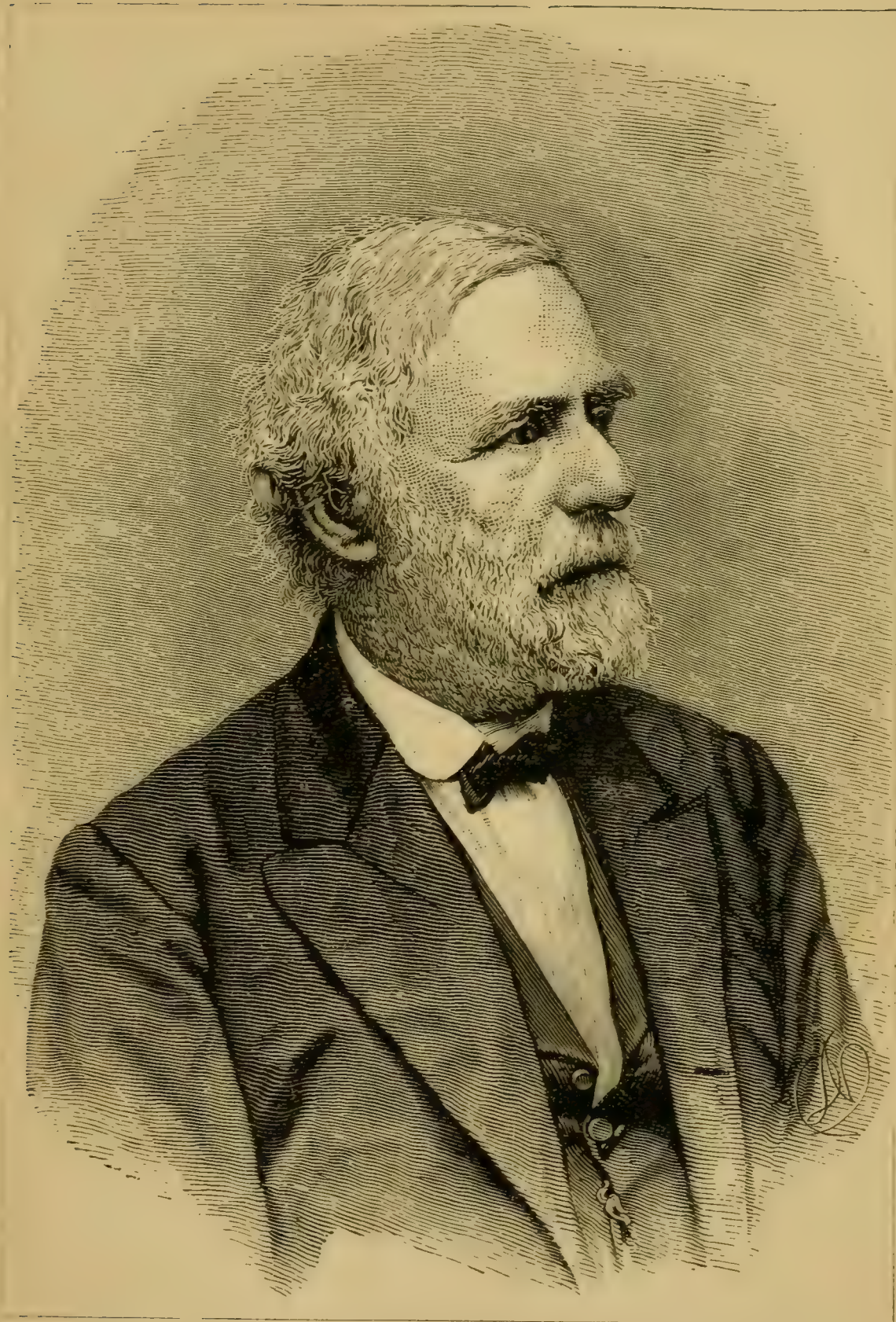
The young master having been found, the sword, letter and message were delivered ; the sable warrior declared that he had captured the flag *honestly*, and stuffing his mouth full of ginger-bread, he fell into his usual place behind the flag, where the two banners marched along together as quietly and peacefully as if a million of lives and thousands of millions of money were not to be sacrificed to furl one and unfurl the other.

As soon as his command halted for the night, the young man went into an adjacent farm house, and wrote to several friends in Richmond, bespeaking kind offices toward his prisoner friend. On the reverse side of the letter to Miss Seymour, he wrote, after the date : "Captured this day, at Williamsburg—unhurt. Address reply to Libby Prison, Richmond, Va. Care of Hon. ————," and, finding an unexpected opportunity, he sent the letters forward to Richmond that night in the hands of a refugee from the peninusula.

More than two months elapsed before Mr. Stewart had

an opportunity to visit Richmond for the purpose of seeing his friend in the Libby prison. In the meantime he had seen the "grandest army that ever trod the planet" hurled, defeated and demoralized, from the defenses around Richmond, and only saved from utter ruin and annihilation by the consummate ability of its gallant commander, and by the absence of proper concert of action on the part of some of the general officers of the noble Lee. Would the assertion be a startling one that the rock upon which the Confederacy split was a lack of the self-sacrificing devotion to the cause, and of the prompt and unhesitating obedience to orders, at all times and at all hazards, on the part of many general and field officers, such as characterized the rank and file of the army? That more of stern discipline, and less of tender magnanimity toward these, might have put the young Confederacy into the haven of her hopes before she cruised on to the "shallows and miseries" of exhaustion?

The young man felt a selfish disappointment on learning that his friend had been paroled and sent to Harrison's Landing, where his demoralized comrades were lying, astounded and crestfallen, under cover of their numerous gunboats on the James river. At the home of a relative who received and forwarded his mail, he found, among many other letters, one which bore no post-mark, and on which he recognized Captain Conrad's free, bold chirography. What was his surprise, on tearing it open, to find it contained, in addition to a short note from his friend, a sealed envelope, addressed to himself, in Miss Seymour's beautiful, round, smooth hand. He read his friend's note: "Old fellow, your friends came to see me, and showed me every kindness. I am to be paroled, and I shall go to see them in person; but I shall have no



General Robert E. Lee.

opportunity to express to you my deep sense of obligation for your thoughtful kindness. God grant that our commands may not be fated to meet each other in battle again. We are brothers in heart, but how widely separated in all else? May the god of battles keep and preserve you !” But he could not tear the envelope of the other open immediately.

Placing it in the breast pocket of his coat, he proceeded to Capitol Square, and, after promenading the shaded walks for some time, he threw himself upon the green turf, and opening the envelope, tenderly and with slightly trembling hands, he read what he recognized as a free translation and adaptation of a German song, which had often caused a thrill of sadness to steal over his heart, as he listened to its plaintive melody from the lips of her whom his soul had enshrined :

“ The long, long weary day
Is past in grief away ;
And ah ! I’m sadly, sadly weeping !
When, from my window’s height,
I look out on the night,
I still am weeping,
My lone watch keeping !”

“ For he, alas ! is gone,
Whose heart was mine alone ;
And still I’m sadly, sadly weeping !
Ah ! will he ne’er come more,
And love me as before ?
And say cease weeping,
Thy lone watch keeping ?”

This was all ; not another letter or character was there ; and the young man sighed to see so much unoccupied virgin space on the sheet, bearing messages only to his imagination, but such messages as caused his heart to

thrill again, while it wept with sad loving sympathy. Ah! the cruel, gentle, unbelieving believer! The darling image in plastic clay! Lying at full length upon the turf, he closed his eyes, and remained motionless for some time, while precious reminiscences, now wearing the black robes of mourning, flitted through his mind, causing a dewy moisture occasionally to fringe his eye-lashes.

Like a weary traveler, being called during the darkness of night to resume a wearisome journey, came the voice of Captain Flournoy, recalling his mind to the sad realities of the present:

“Hello, Stewart, old fellow! Playing dead soldier on a pleasant battle-field, eh? Lively times at camp. No rest for the weary. Three days rations to be cooked, if the cooks can find the rations. Another ‘greatest captain of the age’ in the field. Got to pull down the bars and turn him out. Up on the Rappahannock this time; don’t know how to run; never heard of retreat. Never saw anything but the gray back of a Reb. Headquarters in the saddle. Too terribly terrible for anything. Making war on women, children, horses, mules, wardrobes, jewelry-boxes, smoke-houses, pig-styes, and hen-roosts. These three P’s will surely cause us to P—eg out; Phearful Phorager Pope is on the rampage!”

Sad as had been the young man’s feelings, he sprang to his feet, with a hearty laugh at his friend’s facetious humor, and accompanied him on the long tramp back to camp. Arriving there, he read, in a dispatch to one of the Richmond papers:

“Pope has thrown open all the country, occupied or controlled by his soldiers to unlimited spoliation, and the land is being ravaged by a horde of barbarians!”

In a candid and honorable Northern journal, he read :

“Rapid strides toward villainy have been made within the last two weeks; men who at home would have shuddered at the thought of touching another man’s property, now appropriate remorselessly whatever comes within their reach. Thieving, they imagine, has now become an authorized practice.”

Alas for blind hate! Alas for fanatical insanity! Within less than one short month from the merry fryin’ bee’ of rancid salt pork, the magnificent Lee and the splendid Jackson, with their overworked little army of



Headquarters in the Field.

ragged heroes, had lain Mr. Pope’s fame to rest forever in “honor’s truckle-bed,” while he himself pursued, with frantic eagerness, “lines of retreat,” which there was no time to study, but which instinct taught him.

CHAPTER XVII.

LOVE AND ETHNOLOGY.

*“Dissembled love is like
The poison of perfumes, a killing sweetness.”—SEWELL.*

*“Shame on the policy that first began
To tamper with the heart!”—HAVARD’S REGULUS.*

ON the morning of Mr. Deaderick’s departure, with his slaves for New Orleans, he had sent Henry’s wife and children, together with the brother of the woman, over to “The Oaks,” with a polite note to Fox, stating that he had thought better of his unfeeling and unchristian resolve to take the woman and children away from the husband and father; but as he had made a vow that he would not sell them to Mr. Stewart, they were sent over as a present, if they would be so accepted. If not, then Fox was to dispose of them as he saw fit.

In New Orleans, Mr. Deaderick found that while negroes had not depreciated in price, there was so little money in circulation, that it was next to impossible to sell them for cash. This did not disturb the shrewd young man in the least, for his great faith in the overwhelming power of the North caused his prescient vision to see clearly the fate of that beautiful city in the near future. And knowing that cotton and sugar, particularly the former, must advance rapidly and greatly at the North, while, for the want of a market for the former, it must be practically valueless as a cash commodity in the South, he

gladly sold his negroes in families for their full cash value in gold, and took hogsheads of sugar and bales of cotton, at a low price, in lieu of cash. The sugar he converted quickly into cotton, and having good credit at the banks, founded partly on the thousands of bales of cotton which he was beginning to store up, he became a large cotton broker and speculator. But he never sold a lot except for the purpose of going into the up-country and replacing it with a larger and better lot; so when the Federal army entered that city, they found an Alabama ex-slaveholder its largest cotton owner, and the one representative—or supposed representative—of that anomalous animal, the “Union man” in the South, after the war had begun, who preferred to be *thought* a traitor to the principles of his fathers and to his friends and kindred, rather than be *known* to be a coward.

Being possessed of a passably fair education, and of fine personal appearance, with a good address, the young man made his way slowly into some of the best circles of society, and had succeeded in making the acquaintance of a very wealthy family by the name of D’Elfons, consisting only of an aged widow and an invalid daughter of uncertain age. He became a frequent visitor at their house, and seemed to take great interest in little scraps of family history that occasionally fell from the lips of the younger lady, whose eccentricity at times seemed to him to border on the confines of incipient insanity. A cautious exercise of one of the predominating faculties of his people gave him a meagre and rather disjointed history of the family. He learned that the old lady had separated from her husband in early life, and that the latter had subsequently married a “low woman” in New Orleans, and amassed a very large fortune. That after the old man’s death an impostor, whom

he had accepted as a relative, got possession of his papers and wealth and sold the second wife—who had been a slave—into slavery again, with her two children. That, on the death of the impostor, it was found the old man's papers had not been destroyed, and that he had manumitted and been married to this second wife privately ; and that only the delicate and declining health, and the violent feelings of her mother prevented the younger lady from seeking the supposed slaves and putting them in possession of their rights.

When the Federal troops entered the distracted city, Mr. Deaderick met them with open arms, and though he was believed to be a Southern man, his relations with the officers were of the most friendly and cordial nature until the promulgation of General Butler's infamously celebrated order of May 15th, known as the "Woman's Order." He had imprudently protested against this order as a cowardly and brutal exercise of military power ; and had, in consequence, fallen under the displeasure of those who had thus foolishly published to the civilized world their bitter, unmanly and inhuman resentment of the proud scorn of helpless beauty. Still, his sojourn in the Crescent City—which was destined to see despotic rule advance step by step until civilization should grow sick from contemplating the hideous spectacle—might have been pleasant for a short time longer, had it not happened that, in passing along St. Charles street one evening, he encountered a lady, whom he had met in society, struggling in the arms of a drunken soldier, in a frantic effort to prevent his bloated lips from coming in contact with her features. Whatever may have been the faults and failings of the young man, a lack of the common instincts of manhood was not one of them, and in an instant the brute was

hurled by a herculean blow in the face against the sharp corner of a stone building ten feet away, and lay, with his skull fractured by the fall, apparently mortally hurt, and bleeding profusely at the mouth and nose. “Run!” he shouted to the lady, as he stooped and drew the fallen man’s bayonet from its scabbard, to protect himself from capture by a soldier and half a dozen negroes, who had been looking on, in great glee, at the execution of General Butler’s order in the mild manner rendered necessary by the publicity of the place.

The sight of bright steel in the hands of a powerful man was enough to put the negroes to flight; but a vigorous and effective thrust in the side with the bayonet, was necessary to cause the white man to join in the flight; and the young man being now “master of the situation,” but fearing his ability to continue so, in view of the fact that he heard the tramping of feet around the corner, he threw the bayonet away and taking the advice he had given the lady, disappeared with commendable celerity.

During the night he ascertained that the soldier whom he had hurled against the building had died; and feeling satisfied that he must ultimately be recognized by some of those who witnessed the encounter, he determined to quit the city. It is true he could have found witnesses by whom to prove his Northern birth and sympathy, but they were Southern white people, a whole city full of whom he well knew would be counted as naught against the conflicting testimony of a “colored gentleman;” so he set speedily to work in preparation for his departure.

During the next day he kept himself closeted with his agent, to whom he gave instructions to ship his cotton—about three thousand bales—to New York, with instructions that cheap storage be found for it, and it be held

until the market price reached, or nearly approximated, one dollar per pound, unless he should, in person, order a sale at a lower figure. Having arranged all business matters satisfactorily, he passed through the lines that night and made his way back to Alabama, whither he was attracted by a more inviting field of speculation.

On the next morning, after his arrival at home, where he had left two house servants with a view of again making a sojourn there, he rode over to "The Oaks," and inquired for Fox. On being informed that Fox was absent in Georgia, but was expected back daily, he inquired for "Miss D'Elfons."

"Ef dat's marmsell you's a talkin' about," said mammy, looking at him curiously, "she's 'bout de green-'ouse some whar, an' you kin look for her out dar."

Walking around to the green-house, he found Marienne looking after some cuttings that were being rooted. She returned his very warm but respectful greeting politely, and as he immediately broached the subject that had brought him over, she was soon gazing at him in undisguised astonishment.

"You have never heard of my proposition to Mr. Stewart?" he exclaimed, now regretting that he himself had mentioned it. "I am surprised at that! But my object was not to keep you bound by the shackles of slavery; but on the contrary, to unlock your fetters and make you as free as the life-giving air that fans your cheek. You may ask why I did not free those who belonged to me before setting out to do missionary work of that kind; and my answer is that they are of a baser blood and have not the same claim upon my sympathy. If this answer shall be deemed unsatisfactory I have another, and one which will lay bare the soul of the

matter. Two years ago at a barbecue you thought I presumed upon my position to speak words to you that you deemed insulting to a slave. Those words would have been deemed the very opposite of insulting had they been addressed to any other lady in the land, and my only fault lay in forgetting, for the moment, that you were a slave. I now desire to see you a free woman that, without the fear of giving offense, I may speak those words again ; may give free rein to my long-restrained desire to tell you that I love you with all my heart and soul, and that you alone of all the world can make me a happy man.”

When the young man ceased speaking, Marienne, who was leaning against a bench of the green-house, gazed at him with that peculiar expression which betokens an entire absence of self-consciousness, until his flushed face and embarrassed manner recalled her thoughts to herself. Then, speaking with something of an air of bewilderment, she said :

“Your manner, Mr. Deaderick, is intended to assure me that you are dealing candidly with me ; and this being the case I have no right to assume that you are not. Assuming that you are, candor on my part compels me to say that I do not wish you to interest yourself in my welfare. If I could consent to become your manumitted slave, I should be without a protector and without means of support, unless I accepted your hand in marriage. Were I to do that you could not raise me to your level in society, and you would be chafed to find yourself compelled to descend to a lower plane on my account.”

“Do not say that !” replied the young man, earnestly ; “I should care nothing for the sneers of self-satisfied ‘society ;’ for I should prize you above society, and above all the world. Beside, I should take you to the North,

and make you, as you should be, the queen of society ; for there thought is free."

"Do not deceive yourself. Thought there is less free than here. My reading, which has been quite extensive and discursive, so far as periodical literature is concerned at least, teaches me that there are no people more self-satisfied, or more scornful of all others, than those of the North. Political animosity has made sympathy with the slave fashionable there, but that sympathy is an exotic public sentiment, while the indigenous individual sentiment is hatred of the negro as the most inferior of all races. Here the sentiment is individual sympathy and pity for an inferior race ; nothing more nor less. This is a healthy and stable sentiment. All thought here is healthy. It sends its roots into the stable earth and its branches into the purifying sunlight. But puritan thought at the North is like the Australian orchis, which, scorning to send its roots into the wholesome earth, attaches itself to some barren rock, and feels out with them to catch all that may be noxious in the atmosphere, and ripens its fruit with medicinal or poisonous properties according to the prevailing direction of the fickle winds. Were I to go there with you, this fruit, which would now, no doubt, be wholesome for me, perhaps a few years hence would be quite the reverse. No ; I love the South ; its stability and conservatism. I know my exact position, and am satisfied with it."

"But think of the degradation which man's laws here put upon your mother's race ! The South is unprogressive and hide-bound in its ideas, if you will permit the expression."

"The South is less progressive in some respects than the North ; but progress here means improvement in all

that relates to social advancement or civilization. We cannot say the same of New England. Her *unhinder*-bound ideas, if *you* will permit the expression, sometimes, I may say often, progress in the wrong direction. If by my mother's race you mean the negro race, I must say, as far as its degradation is concerned, that I fear you are not a careful student of ethnology, if you consider that man's laws have ever, in any age or country, had any influence toward degrading it or any part of it."

"Do not the laws here keep him in bondage?"

"Yes; and has not that bondage elevated him from a savage of the lowest type, with his hand turned against all mankind, to a civilized and tractable creature? Are not the slaves here as far superior to their ancestors, or the present race of their brothers, in Africa as the white people here are to the slaves?"

"I am surprised to hear you speak so contemptuously of the race?"

"Because my mother had a little of their blood? But a simple statement of facts, that cannot be contradicted is no evidence of contempt. So far from feeling contempt, I feel a very warm regard for many negroes, but this does not close my eyes to facts concerning their race."

"You do not consider the fact that the negro in his native land has labored under peculiar disadvantages. For the most part, he has been isolated by the burning and barren wastes around him, from that contact with outside peoples, and influences which history teaches tends so greatly to originate civilization."

"Not to originate it! I think you have misread the lessons of history on that subject. Scientific research has taught that civilization has originated only in such localities as *are* isolated and shut off from outside influences.

The necessary conditions seem to have been, according to Virginia's great scientist, Maury, a bright sky, a mild climate, a dry atmosphere—or low dew point, as he expresses it—and virtually insuperable barriers *against outside influences*. Several parts of the interior of Africa possess all of these requirements, and, to the student of ethnology it is an interesting and significant fact that of all mankind, the negro is the only race on which those conditions have failed to produce an indigenous civilization."

"The British Isles are, or were, before boats were built, quite isolated from outside influences, and I do not think you can credit them with an indigenous civilization."

"No; but they were too large to serve as a proper nursery for the tender germ. So large as to contain within themselves the destructive element—hostile tribes or clans. Beside, I imagine people have been going about in boats since Noah fashioned the Ark; and beside, again, those Isles lack two of the necessary requirements—bright skies and a dry atmosphere. But when the seeds of an exotic civilization were spread there they took vigorous root immediately, while that portion of the negro race which was in contact with Egyptian civilization scores of centuries ago is to-day what it is represented by Egyptian pictures to have been then, notwithstanding the efforts that have been directed toward them. From the building of the pyramids, or the fashioning of the Sphinx—in both of which they took a part as menials or slaves—down to the present day, they have proved themselves, not only incapable of originating a civilization, but of acquiring it from others who were desirous to impose it on them, except when scattered among a civilized people,

upon condition that made them subservient to their mastery.”

“If your inference is that because of these facts the negro proves himself to be an inferior race, you will have to regard the Indian in the same light, for he has failed to acquire our civilization. You must apply your theory *in extenso*.”

“The ‘theory’ is not mine, and it is far more than a theory. But the Indian is acquiring our civilization since we have begun to send him Bibles instead of New England rum. I consider, of course, every branch of the Mongolian race as inferior to the Caucasian, but the Indian, beside showing an ability and a willingness to accept the best as well as the worst elements of our civilization, originated for himself a civilization quite equal to that of his kindred, the Chinese, in the only spots on the American continent that possessed all of the necessary requirements. You do the race great injustice to ignore the wonderful civilization of the Incas around their beautiful lake in South America, and the magnificent splendor of the Aztecs in the *terra templada* of Mexico.”

“Yes ; I admit that I made the remark without consideration. There may be as much difference in the races of men as in the breeds of horses, or of dogs, if you will excuse the comparison, only it is not the custom in my country to think so. There, physical manhood, without reference to race characteristics, or mental or moral peculiarities, is the object of sentimental regard ; here it seems to be an ability to receive and retain a high state of civilization. It is possible that your standard of excellence may be the better one ; but permit me to say that we have traveled very far from the subject on which I wish to speak, and which is nearest to my heart. If you will

not go with me to the North, I will take you to Europe. I am wealthy—more so than you suppose—and can make you a prominent figure in society there.”

“I have flattered myself that it is my *love* you seek, Mr. Deaderick,” said Marienne, with a shade of disappointment in her countenance, “and if so, you should not speak of your wealth, or the advantages it might confer. It may seem incomprehensible to you that I



Mr. Deaderick's Home.

decide to remain ‘in bondage,’ but I must repeat that I have no idea of changing my condition.”

“Pardon me,” replied the young man, with embarrassment; “I spoke of my wealth only to show you that I have the ability to make you happy in any part of the globe which you might prefer for a residence, provided you could give me that deep and tender love, of which I believe you to be capable. The poet tells us that ‘Love

gives itself, and is not bought,’ and I ask you to suffer your love to give itself into my keeping, and only mention my wealth to show you that there can be no extraneous circumstance to prevent the two united loves from producing perfect happiness for you as well as for me.”

“Mr. Deaderick,” said Marienne, very seriously “considering my position and yours, you have paid me the highest compliment it is in the power of man to pay to woman ; and I should show a poor appreciation of your unparalleled generosity if I could be willing to deceive you or allow you to deceive yourself. You have won my admiration, but I should be unworthy of yours if I did not tell you that I do not think I can ever give you a more tender feeling. I regret this, but I have no doubt it is true that ‘Love gives itself,’ and can neither be given nor withheld by any act of volition.”

“I thank you for your kind opinion of me,” said the young man, preparing to take leave, “and shall not regard anything you have said as forbidding my suit. Admiration is the beginning of love, and perfect admiration is its perfection. I only ask you now to permit me to pay my addresses to you, and to feel fully assured that the deepest and warmest love of my heart is yours.”

Before Marienne could speak he had pressed her hand, and left the greenhouse. But he did not go as he came. He entered its doors as a fortune-hunter, but left them a sincere and earnest lover.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WARFARE OR BRIGANDAGE ?

*"There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave."*—SHAKSPEARE'S HAMLET.

*"To vice industrious, but to noble deeds,
Timorous and slothful."*—MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

ON the morning of the same day that witnessed the commencement of Mr. Deaderick's rather novel courtship, the little town of Barrensville was thrown into a state of extreme excitement by the announcement that a brigade of Federal soldiers, under the famous General Turchin—famous, like so many, alas ! on his side, who were his superiors in rank, if not in manhood and civilization, for no deed of legitimate war—was coming to occupy the town, and put all the country north of the Tennessee river "to rights" generally. As Turchin's fame had preceded him, and as it was not known precisely what his military method of putting things "to rights" might be or what there was that needed righting, there was some feeling of apprehension on the part of the better and wealthier class of citizens.

The country north of the river had been held by the Federals since the fall of Nashville ; but as it was not fully occupied, independent squads of Confederate soldiers from the south side of the river, generally men on furlough, and rarely more than three or four together at a time, would dash in to see their families and friends, and for

the fun of a joke would sometimes deploy as skirmishers, thus making the impression on some marauding squadron of cavalry, or company of infantry, that an opposing force was in their front, and putting them to precipitous flight. Very often the whole sub-district would be thrown into a fever of commotion by such impudent pranks of the reckless young “rebels,” and it was very annoying to the dignity of the sub-district, to say the least.

Of course, as the greater number of these merry, young raiders had sisters, or sweethearts, at Barrensville, that town was the Mecca, to which all turned their faces before recrossing the river; and in its vicinity some of the most *alarming* practical jokes had been perpetrated. It was General Turchin’s high resolve to “put to rights” this courting and joking business, if it lay within the power of the military arm of his government to do so!

In the beginning of the war excitement there had been a very strong Union sentiment in the little town, which had prompted a small squad of citizens to nail the United States flag to the highest point of the cupola of the court house, and express a determination to keep it there, or die in the effort, at the very time that measures were being taken to organize a company for the war. The flag was shot down the next morning, by an enthusiastic and rather fiery young gentleman, who drove ten miles, alone, for that especial purpose,* but this disloyalty to the Southern cause was something so unusual and novel, that it excited only laughter and ridicule, on the part of the sober-sided citizens of the pleasant little village. Yet, it was thought afterward, that the existence of a strong, Union sentiment there, and the fact that an

* Captain John B. Floyd, of Wheeler’s Cavalry; promoted after the battle of Chickamauga.

eloquent young lawyer, belonging to one of the wealthiest and most influential families, had actually traveled around making speeches denouncing the Confederacy, and threatening dire evils to all who dared to take up arms against the Union, should have recommended the people, or a portion of them, at any rate, to the mercy of Federal soldiers.

But it was sadly amusing, in the light of subsequent events, to see the difference in the effect of the news of General Turchin's approach upon the two little factions. One retired within doors, and the rumbling of furniture being hastily moved about, and the jingle of silver plate being roughly handled, told of preparations for an emergency going on within. The other, throwing open doors and windows and displaying flags and flowers—the former hastily gotten up for the occasion—stood upon the streets with smiling faces.

As General Turchin and his staff rode through the streets, conducted by a "Union" youth, on his way to the public square, he rewarded only with a cold stare the doffed hats and other manifestations of respect. As he had seen nothing of this kind before, even from the negroes, it is likely that he believed the tokens of respect and welcome were offered in sarcastic irony; for it is difficult to suppose that a gentleman and soldier, so polished and gallant, could have been guilty of so gross a violation of the plainest requirements of courtesy. Be that as it may, he had mapped out his programme, and was not to be joked out of it, whether the jokers came as pretended skirmishers or pretended friends of the Union; and after forming his brigade on the public square, he dismissed the men with the information that for two hours he should close his eyes and refuse to see anything that might occur, no matter of



General Turchin enters Baïrenville.

what nature. “Gentlemen, behold the ‘sassy’ Rebs., the blushing maidens and the evidences of wealth! If you are not *too* highly civilized you may have a gay time for a couple of hours!”

It is proper that a writing which professes to deal, to a limited extent, in fiction, should not give a full and accurate account of such scenes as then occurred, lest the most matter-of-fact description should be denounced as the wildest vagaries of a madly riotous imagination. We will give, instead, a few extracts from Federal papers, whose sympathy with the outraged community, was only such as every fully civilized human creature must feel for any fellow creatures under circumstances of peculiar trial and distress. Said one :

“General Turchin informed his troops that he would shut his eyes for two hours and turn them loose upon the town and citizens of —, Ala.; the very same citizens, who, when all the rest of the state was disloyal, nailed the National colors to the highest pinnacle of the court house cupola. Houses and stores were broken open and robbed of everything valuable; and what could not be transported was destroyed. Safes were broken open and robbed of thousands of dollars. Wives and daughters were insulted, and husbands and fathers arrested.

* * * * *

“In a word, every outrage was committed and every excess indulged in, by means of which a brutal force could disgrace our arms.”

Another, making comments on the above, said :

“Such and similar acts disgraced our arms when we first occupied Bowling Green, Ky.; and the matter was hushed up to save the credit of the army.

* * * * *

“The good of the service and the character of every Union soldier cries for the punishment of such disgraceful conduct.”

And another :

“The conduct of some of these men was the worst a licentious soldiery could inflict upon defenceless women; so vile, indeed, that an officer

of the army, who regards the honor of his cloth, has determined to lay the matter before the government. Humanity demands retributive justice!"

And still another :

"General Mitchell and a portion of his command have perpetrated in North Alabama deeds of cruelty and of guilt, the bare narration of which makes the heart sick. The particulars of the case will be laid before the authorities at Washington."

And one more :

"We at present forbear to go into the heart-sickening particulars of the case; but, if necessary, we will not hesitate to do so hereafter. Meanwhile, we invoke the authorities, as they value the National honor, and cherish the National cause, to visit swift justice upon the epauletted miscreants."

We will not publish what was told and said by the "Rebel press," the eye-witnesses, or the sufferers, for this is the nineteenth, and not the ninth century; and beside, we are not disposed to furnish the Hottentots with evidence to disprove our theory that any and all sub-races of the Caucasian family are superior to themselves. But in these "piping times of peace" recollections of the horrible scenes, not of war—for the scenes of legitimate war, while often grandly terrible, are never horrible—but of destruction, devastation, rapine, and villainy, that were known in many parts of the South, between and including the years 1862 and 1865, seem to thousands in the South, who were then in the spring-time of life, like the recollections of a delirious nightmare in which they passed from joyous youth to sorrowing age within the space of a hideous dream.

At the moment when General Turchin was intimating, to the gentle spirits under his command that there was no particular reason why they should not throw off the trammels of civilization for a little pleasant relaxation and

recreation, Dr. Hansel sat in his bed-chamber holding a family council with Mrs. Hansel and Miss Seymour. The latter lady was looking pale and sad, but more beautiful, if possible, in her palid sadness, than ever before. The subject under consideration was the propriety of inviting General Turchin and staff to dinner on the next day, which proposition was opposed by both ladies. The hand of war had made no impression upon the physical surroundings of the Atheneum. The grass was as green, the oaks as umbrageous, and the flowers as beautiful and fragrant, as when watered and warmed by the tears and smiles of beautiful nature in her happiest mood, amid the joys of peace.

The council of three had been in session perhaps an hour, when it was unceremoniously called “from labor to refreshment” by the sudden bursting open of the door; and Jane, whose complexion was usually a glossy ebony, rushed in, looking ashy from the violent effort of nature to paint pallid fear upon her countenance.

“Oh, marster,” she exclaimed, trembling and half choking at every word, “dar’s a whole lot o’ dem Linkum Abolitioners in de back yard, an’ one of ’em is done hugged, an’ kissed, an’ rumped up, Miss Alice Brandon, an’ den he knocked her down an’ kicked her, ’cause she spit in his face.”

Dr. Hansel sprang to his feet, and throwing up the sash saw a soldier assisting the half fainting young lady up the back steps, and heard him say: “Run to your room, sissy, and lock the door. Some of our boys are a mighty hard set.” At a little distance off stood a squad of five others, one looking flushed and angry, and the others evidently laughing at and joking him.

“Which one of you men,” demanded the old gentleman, angrily, “insulted and abused that child?”

“What business is that of yours, you d—d old rebel?” angrily exclaimed the rough, burly fellow who seemed to be the butt of ridicule. “If you don’t pull in your d—d old sun-flower of a noddle, and sing mighty small, I’ll come up there and pitch you out of that window, neck and heels; you old blear-eyed rebel; shut up your ugly mug, d—m you!”

“I shall report you to General Turchin, sir!” shouted the old gentleman, in a towering rage, “and see that your outrageous conduct is severely punished, sir! You are a disgrace to the service, and to your country, sir! Tell me what your name is, sir!”

“Ha! ha! boys,” exclaimed the man, with a fierce laugh, “the bottle-nosed old cabbage-head wants to know my name! Well old death’s-head, wait till I get up there. By the God that made Moses, I’ll whisper my name into your ear, and then cut the d—d old flopper off and make you eat it!”

“Daughter,” exclaimed the old gentleman, violently slamming down the sash, “where is that butcher knife I had made last month?”

“You do not want the butcher knife, sir!” replied Miss Seymour, snatching it from the drawer of a bureau, and resisting the old man’s efforts to obtain possession of it. “Remember that ‘a soft answer turneth away wrath;’ and remember also that you are the only protector of a house full of women and children!”

Dr. Hansel had not time to seek to obtain, through the power of argument, what his physical force could not give him the possession of, before he heard the rapid strides of the angry man approaching his door, which Jane had slammed as she ran out. Going forward with the determination to speak the soft words which the

young lady had recommended, he was in the act of opening the door, when a blow in the face hurled him to the centre of the room, a stunned and bleeding mass. Mrs. Hansel, overcome by the sight of what she believed to be the corpse of her husband, sank upon the floor in a swoon, as the soldier sprang into the room for the purpose of inflicting further punishment upon the unresisting object of his blind passion. But a sight met his eyes that caused him to pause. Miss Seymour, who had quickly sprung to the aid of the thoroughly helpless man, stood erect, with the rude but dangerous looking dagger clasped tightly in her delicate hand, and gazed into the eyes of the intruder with that steady and unflinching firmness which is said to cause even wild beasts to cower.

“Dare to touch this old man again, you cowardly wretch,” she said, firmly and defiantly, “and I will drive this dagger to your heart!”

“Ha! ha! my little beauty of a she-devil,” said the man, unable to meet her gaze, but glancing at her furtively, “I’ll fix you! This isn’t the first bout, by a long shot, that I’ve had with you d—d little spit-fire she-adders. If you’d rather have my bayonet in your little rebel bread-basket than to treat a gentleman with proper civility, why the fault is yours, and not mine and you shall be accommodated!”

“Beware what you do, sir!” said the young lady, in a low firm tone of voice, still gazing fixedly into his eyes. “I am not without friends on the Union side! General Mitchell, at Huntsville, is a friend of mine, and if you want to cheat the gallows of its just due, you will beware. Put up your bayonet, sir!” she added, suddenly and commandingly.

Seeing the man make an involuntary motion to obey

the command, but instantly resume his threatening attitude, she knew that the proper moment had come for her to speak the soft words that disarm fierce natures; and added, immediately:

“This old man, whom you have treated so brutally is a native of New England, and a friend to the Union. You richly merit severe punishment, but if you will go immediately, and take away the men who are tramping through the house, I shall not suffer you to be reported for your outrageous conduct.”

“Well,” said the man, doggedly, returning his bayonet to his scabbard, “as you belong to our country, and are a pet of the general’s, I’ll let you off. You’re a sassy little nug; and the sassier the sweeter, is my motto; but the country is full of ’em, and I’ll let you pass, for the general’s sake. But you tell that d—d old jimson-blossom on the floor there to keep a civil tongue in his head hereafter when gentlemen are around.” And without another word, the “gallant avenger of treason” stalked sullenly away.

After ringing violently for Jane, the young lady did what she could for her mother and Dr. Hansel, and Jane, not having made her appearance, she rang again, and went to the window to see if the soldiers had left the grounds. All was quiet below, but glancing across the town she saw vast columns of black smoke issuing from different localities, and lazily rolling upward to join the clouds. But in the town no one seemed to have noticed the fact. The court house and church bells, half a dozen in number, seemed to have forgotten to “shriek out their affright,” and not even a child’s voice honored the besom of destruction with so much as a cry of “fire!” But a hoarse dull roar of shouts and “ungodly glee” was borne

"This old man, whom you have treated so brutally, is a native of New England, and a friend to the Union."



upon the gentle breeze, and the young lady, falling upon her knees, and clasping her fair young hands before the window, as if deprecating the wrath of the “deaf and frantic fire,” she sent her pure spirit upon the wings of prayer to heaven, in a devout and earnest petition, for confusion upon these unworthy representatives of the military arm of her government.

Jane had heard the summons of the bell, but was engaged in a determined effort to rescue a fine watch and chain, belonging to one of her favorites in the school, from the possession of the soldier, who had shown sympathy for the poor little Brandon girl, when he saw her so shamefully abused. But he had no sympathy for the inanimate “thing of beauty,” or rather, his sympathy was too great, and he had determined to make it a “joy forever” to his lady-love at home. Jane had decreed otherwise; and despite the thrusting of his elbows into her side, in the scuffle, and his efforts to choke her off, she held on to him with stubborn determination. Being unwilling to hurt the poor girl seriously, the man finally changed his tactics, and throwing his arms around her, commenced hugging and kissing her furiously.

“Oh, lawdy!” exclaimed the girl, tightening her hold on the watch, “dat ain’t gwine to hurt me. I ain’t so screamish es de young ladies is. Ef you kin stan’ it I kin; but ef Dick was here, he’d bust your head open! It’s gwine to make me mighty sick to-morrow, an’ I hopes it’ll pizen you, but I kin stan’ it from now till den, an’ I hopes you kin, you mean pizen dog!”

At this moment the soldier who had assaulted Dr. Hansel, came down, and laughingly exclaimed:

“Oh, give the girl her watch, Garrison. We didn’t come down here to rob niggers; and what would Hannah

Phillips, up to home, think if she should hear of your hugging and kissing another girl in such fashion."

The mention of his *dulcinea's* name caused the soldier's arms to drop, as if paralyzed; and Jane, suddenly thrusting her hand into his pocket, rescued the watch, with the angry exclamation, as she turned to leave:

"You mean white-face slink! I *has* heard dat nigger's slobber is pizen to Yankees; an' I hopes you's got a dose, dat'll give you de hiderfoby!"

Jane entered the room, while the young lady was still kneeling before the window, and her shrieks and lamentations soon brought half a dozen or more of the larger school girls from the recitation-room, in which they had all locked themselves together. Dr. and Mrs. Hansel were placed upon beds, and proper restoratives used. Jane went for Adolphus to take a note to General Turchin requesting that a guard be sent to the college; but that worthy could not be found, and it was suggested by the girls, that all of the larger ones of themselves go, under a white flag, bearing a note from Miss Seymour. This young lady, however, intuitively understanding that a black skin would be a more respected safegaurd than all the white flags that the linen of the college could furnish, prevailed on Jane to take the note. Within half an hour she returned, bringing only a verbal message.

"Miss Flo'nce," she said, fanning herself with her slatted bonnet of flowered pink calico, "dat pizen Yankee ain't no general; he's a Dutchman! An' as sassy as de balance of 'em; snortin' an' cavortion' roun' like a fat steer, in a chiny shop! Dey's 'havin' scand'lous; burnin' houses, 'sultin' ladies an' robbin' everything. Dey don't b'lieve in no hereafter, nor nothin'. De day o' judgment is done come; an' every man looks like he thinks

he's de angel Gabriel, an' is blowin' his own horn ! I des wish Mars' Henry Fieldin', Tandy Lewis, Wiley Webb, Bill McClellan, John McDonald, John Rawlins, Dave Phillips, Dave Houston, de Fletcher boys, an' 'bout twenty more, would slip in here to-night ! Dar'd be one o' de old stampedes dat you reads about in de books ; an' in de mawnin' dar wouldn't be no gyardin' palins an' cross fences lef' standin' in town ! But dat pizen Yankee Dutchman says ef you's a Unioner, dat you ain't got no bisness down here, an' you'd better git up an' git ! An' dat he's gwine to put a gyard roun' de town, an' you needn't be skeered, 'cause dey'll keep off de rebels ! Now dat's what I calls de pink o' sassy imperdence ! An' he says, besides, dat he's gwine to break up dis nest o' suckin' doves !"

No doubt the gallant general felt a grim pleasure in sending this facetious and sarcastic message. And yet, no doubt, he was prompted by a sense of stern duty to his government and to the troops under his command ; for what safety was there for his brigade so long as the bright-eyed naiads of the Pierian fount were there to attract the merry Rebel raiders ?

On the next morning Dr. Hansel was notified that the school buildings would be needed for hospital and other purposes ; and that, if he desired it, he should have a military escort for his pupils as far as Huntsville or Decatur. As for himself and family, he was offered transportation by way of Nashville to the North, which, it was intimated, was the proper place for them, if they really sympathized with the Northern cause.

It was not without deep regret, and a feeling of humiliation, that Dr. Hansel turned his back on the pleasant home and profitable employment that had been his in the

sunny South, and set his face toward the uncertainties of the future, amid the bleak and barren hills of New England. It is true the school had dwindled to a mere handful of pupils, but it still gave him a liberal support; and now, Othello-like, he found his occupation gone. Unlike the Sherman, which had been getting his bread and butter out of a Louisiana school, the "Swamp Angel," which wrote W. T. before its name to distinguish it from another "Angel" of the same mould, but of smooth bore and more "fussy" explosion, he had no knowledge of brigandage as a *coarse* art to barter for bread and gold; and he saw, amid the sharp competition in his own land, only a dreary prospect of almost hopeless struggle before him.

Whatever Miss Seymour's feelings may have been, she did not express them to those around her. The Misses Anderson, and other intimate friends, had left the school soon after the fall of Fort Donelson, and there were now none left to whom she cared to unburthen her sad heart. When she left she threw her arms around Jane's neck, and upon the bosom of that faithful and affectionate creature she breathed a few convulsive sobs, and left in her hands a letter for Marienne.

It was with tearful eyes that Marienne read the last words of the poor, heart-broken girl. She made no direct mention of events of the past or present, or of hopes or fears for the future.

"I wish," she said, "to utter my last words in the beautiful South to one whose pure heart, I fully believe, will hold me in loving remembrance always. The world, alas! I find is full of wrong and wickedness. How different from the world I thought it but little more than one short year ago! Trials have thickened around me, and hideous Wrong has stalked abroad, until my poor

heart has cried to the Father of all Mercies for pity ; cried aloud, in vain, in an agony of grief, until Faith struggles to keep the black clouds of skepticism from closing around me, and shutting His face forever from the despairing gaze of my soul ! Can it be that civilization is a lie ; that religion is a pretense ; that Christianity is a fraud ; and that they have been known to be such all along, and that I, and other simple ones of the earth, are only credulous dupes, and silly ‘dreamers of dreams?’ Father, have mercy ! Marienne, I am a vile sinner ! I will not doubt that He and His Son have all things in their keeping. Civilization may be a lie, but the blessed Jesus Christ died for fallen man. Was not He beaten and reviled, and put to death by base human creatures, who have undergone no change since that day, except such as a belief on Him and obedience to His precepts and imitation of His example have wrought ? Ah ! if my reckless and impious agony of sorrow should cast Him out of my heart, then I am already in the realms of everlasting darkness and despair !”



Desolation.

CHAPTER XIX.

EXTENDING MILITARY OPERATIONS.

*"Lay not the flattering unction to your soul
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks!"*—SHAKSPEARE.

*"Oh! is there not
A time, a righteous time, reserved in fate?"*—THOMSON.

A SHORT time after Peter Dillard's last appearance in these pages, he sought another interview with the old mistress, in which he suggested :

"I's a pretty good smiff, marm, an' dey says when de war gits in full blast dat cotton won't be wuff much, an' you has to have money to buy clo'es an' things for de young mistisses an' de fokes, an' Mr. Naff, de public smiff, is done gone to de war, marchin' by de side o' Lawyer Blanton es big a man es anybody, an' Mars' Chyarles Styode tole me befor' he left, dat I mought have de public shop—you know it's on de cornder of his land—rent free, for doin' de Widder Sloan's work, an' he said I could make a heap mo' cash money dar dan at de plantation shop ; an' I come to talk wid you 'bout it, marm."

Mrs. Dillard having decided to adopt the idea, Peter removed at once into the public shop, and courted an extended patronage. In the course of a few months he had heard a good deal of political talk from customers, who brought work from far and near, as all, or nearly all, of the white smiths were now gone to the war ; and he finally went to the old mistress to unravel the tangled

web of ideas that had been slowly accumulating in his brain.

“What is all dis fussin’ an’ warin’ about, anyhow, mistis?” he asked, as he deposited his shot-bag, with the week’s earnings, on a table. “Dey tells me it’s to free de niggers, an’ I has heard dat tale from fokes, an’ *dem dat ain’t fokes*; an’ I wants to know de straight o’ it, ef you please, marm.”

“They *say* their desire is only to keep us in the Union, but we have known the party in power long enough to be aware that they use language only to conceal their designs, and betray those who confide in their honor. They hate us and will gladly free the negroes, or destroy our homes, or do any possible act of outrage which, as they think, will tend to humble the proud spirit of our people.”

“Ain’t dey Christian fokes up in dat country?”

“Oh, yes; there are some very sincere and true Christians up there. Only a very small minority of the people are Plymouth Rock Puritans.”

“And dem watumacallum Rock Puritins ain’t Christians?”

“Yes; they profess to be.”

“Den how ’bout dem hatin’ our fokes an’ wantin’ to ’stroy de country? I thought Christianity was de same all over de worl’!”

“So it is. But this is like an idea I have seen expressed somewhat after this fashion: Mercury, or quick-silver, is the same all over the world; but the dichlorid of mercury is not the same as the protochlorid of mercury. The first cleanses, and the other poisons. So Christianity is the same all over the world; but the *dicavalierid* of Christianity is not the same as the *proto-puritanid* of Christianity. The first soothes and civilizes, and the other does not.”

“ You talks a heap o’ high-larnt words, mistis, but I ketchus on to your meanin’. It’s like dis : Shortnin’ bread is de same all over de worl’, but de ashcake dat is shortened wid butter an’ lard ain’t like de ashcake dat is shortened wid dat croton oil. De fust makes a man healthy and strong, an’ t’other kicks up a big rumpus inside of ’im. But how is it dat dem fokes claim to be ’pinted by de Lord to do His holy work ? ”

“ They have always sought to make a cat’s-paw of religion to accomplish their selfish ends. When they imported slaves from Africa, they did it to civilize the savage ; when they made slaves of Indians, it was to Christianize the heathen ; when they burned, or murdered by other torture, ministers of the gospel and members of a different religious denomination, it was to rid the earth of heresy and witchcraft ; when they found their land too cold and barren to make slave labor profitable, and sold their slaves to the South, it was to atone for the sins of their ancestors ; and when they determined to gratify their evil passion of animosity toward us—begotten by our open ridicule of their sanctimonious subterfuges—they forced us out of the Union that they might murder our people, and destroy our homes—all for the love of the Lord and to prepare the way for the second coming of the Messiah ! ”

“ Mistis, ” exclaimed the negro, impressively, “ dems de spirits dat took me down in de creek bottom, an’ tol’ me to fall down an’ worshup ’em, an’ I done it like a fool ! But Peter has got his eyes open now ! Thank’ee, mistis ; Sarvent, marm. ” And with a respectful bow, the negro went to his cabin with the most serious tangles in his brain straightened out as he believed.

A few days after the entry of the gallant Turchin and his equally gallant brigade into Barrensville, five soldiers,

on horses evidently “borrowed” from the farmers around, rode up to the door of Peter’s shop, where it happened that the black Vulcan was alone on that day, and patiently hammering away on a plow point.

“I say, mister,” exclaimed one of the party who wore a sword, “can you direct us to the Stewart plantation?”

“What you want dar?” questioned Peter, resting his hammer on the anvil and scrutinizing closely the entire party.

“Oh; nothing in particular. We heard there was a pretty girl there and that they live high.”

“Well, s’posin’ ’twas so; what of it?”

“Ha! Not much; but we like to see fine folks and fine doings. They tell me the girl wears diamonds. Is that so?”

“I dunno what diamunts is, but ef it’s home-spun linsey, it’s true es preachin’.”

“They are mighty rich, aren’t they?”

“Dey’s got ’nuff bread an’ meat an’ home-spun clo’s, ef you calls dat richness.”

“Gold and jewels all buried, perhaps?”

“Yes, dey’s buried all dey had. I seen ’em buryin’ bushels an’ bushels!”

“Holy Brown! I say, show us the place and we’ll go snacks with you!”

“De place is all over de fields. ’Twas corn an’ cotton seeds I seen ’em plantin’; an’ dem dat say dey has got any other sort o’ gold an’ jewels tells a lie.”

“But the girl’s eyes are jewels; we want to see them. Please direct us how to find the place.”

“You see dat road?” asked Peter, going to the door and pointing up the road leading to Barrensville.

“Yes; we came down that road.”

“ Well, dat’s de road. Go straight ahead ’till you comes to a mill five miles from here. Dar you take the lef’ han’ road, an’ five miles mo’ ’ll bring you to Barrensville, an’ when you gits dar you’d better put up your hosses an’ go to tendin’ to your business, ef you has any sort o’ business dar ; specially ef it’s a *healthy* sort o’ business.”

“ Oh ! you’re a d—d secesh, Reb. ! ” exclaimed the officer, wheeling his horse and riding off in the direction indicated by the negro, with the squad following in the rear.

“ Dem Linkum Abolitioners is arter some sort o’ devilment, an’ I’s gwine to notify Fox, ef he has got home, dis mawnin’ ! ” exclaimed Peter, talking to himself, as he hastily threw off his leather apron, put on his coat and seized and tried the “ heft ” of a four-pound hammer.

After crossing the cleared space around the shop, he struck out on a brisk trot, which he kept up till he had passed through the forest and come in sight of “ The Oaks.” Then, seeing no soldiers on the only road which they could have reached by that time, but only Uncle George, with his squad of plowmen and mules, quietly pursuing their peaceful labors in a distant field, he slackened his pace to a quick walk.

Arriving at “ The Oaks,” he found Fox not yet returned, but hourly expected, and Mr. Deaderick sitting on the front porch in a an earnest conversation with Marianne. Calling the gentleman out, he narrated what had passed at the shop ; expressed the opinion that the soldiers would be directed to the place by some one, and advised that Marianne be induced to go over to his old mistresses, or to some place where there were several ladies together. While he was speaking, Mr. Deaderick exclaimed :

“ There they are now, I imagine ; approaching on the north road ! ”

“Dem’s de men !” exclaimed Peter, turning to look in the direction indicated. “Five men, an’ one on a white hoss wid a sode. Dey ain’t los’ much time ! I don’t like to mix up wid white fokses bisness, an’ I’s gwine roun’ to mammy’s cabin, but ef anything happens an’ you wants me an’ my hammer, all you’s got to do is to fetch one holler.”

As Peter went around to the quarters, Mr. Deaderick walked quickly into the house and advised Marienne to retire to her room and lock the door ; assuring her, however, that there was no cause for alarm, but that the men would doubtless pillage the house. Marienne did as advised, taking the precaution first to go into the parlor for a small silver-mounted Mexican dagger which Fox had made her a present of.

As the men approached the front porch the officer exclaimed, with a stare at Mr. Deaderick, who had placed himself at the head of the steps :

“Hello, Johnny Reb, is your name Fox ?”

“My name is Deaderick,” said the gentleman, pleasantly, “and I am a countryman of yours. I belong to New England.”

“Ho ! ho ! What a festive lot of you belong to New England ! There was that anatomical museum’s ticket-of-leave specimen at the school in Barrensville, and now here is this pretty gentleman ! Are you scared, Johnny Reb ?”

“I tell you I am no rebel, sir. I came from New Orleans a few days ago, and am only waiting for company to go to my old home in New England ?”

“Maybe some of them niggers have an old home in New England.”

“Some of their ancestors had, I’ve no doubt,” replied the young man, with a pleasant smile.

"Ha! ha! boys, we've run up with a sassy Johnny Reb, who was born in New England; him and his ancestors. Suppose we take him to the pump and rebaptize him before he can backslide?"

"Suppose I slap your impudent face, sir," exclaimed the young man, showing the first symptom of anger.

"Listen at him, boys," exclaimed the officer, jeeringly. "Isn't he sassy for true? He's depending on them niggers we saw across the field to back him; but they're a mile away, and I could scare the whole lot to death with one flash of a pistol. Two of you take charge of this fellow while we search for arms and ammunition. If he attempts to shout or make a signal pin him to the doorpost with a bayonet through his sassy jaw."

Mr. Deaderick, seeing the temper and spirit of the men, prudently remained silent. But he did not intend to be guarded as a quiet and submissive prisoner, and when the men placed themselves on either side of him, he took an arm of each, and followed the officer into the house. After examining the first room, which chanced to be the dining room, and pocketing the few battered silver spoons that had not been buried with the other ware, the officer ordered the two guards to put the "conscript dodger" in that room, as he did not intend to be dogged over the house by him.

"Before you proceed farther, sir," said the young man, a little angrily, "let me assure you that I am a friend to the Union, and that I shall follow you over the house unless I am prevented by force."

"Oh!" replied the officer, jeeringly, "we know you belong to the Union! Don't we, boys? And we belong to the horse marines; and you can feed us on taffy instead of corn and beans."

“I desire to have no more impudence from you, sir,” said the young man, quite angrily; “but if you dare to offer any indignity to any in this house, I shall see that you are properly punished for it.”

“Punished! Ha! ha! We are the punishers, you impudent rebel. Seize him, boys!”

In a moment the young man was overpowered by the four privates, and was locked in the room, with two of the men as guards. The situation was now extremely embarrassing, and he did not know what course to pursue next, but he determined, if Marienne cried for help, to go to her or throw away his life in the attempt. In her supposed peril he felt his heart going out to her with an enthusiasm that told of a nobler passion than a thirst for gold.

He heard tramping overhead—heard the breaking open of doors, bureaus and wardrobes. Presently there was a violent shuffling of feet, succeeded by a masculine yell, and the words, “The little devil has stabbed me!” Then a succession of piercing screams from Marienne, mingled with the noise of a violent scuffle.

With the quickness of thought the young man dealt one of his guards a blow in the face that brought him to the floor as limp as an ox under the butcher’s axe, and, as the other seized him, he grasped him by the throat in a desperate struggle for mastery. In a moment the door was burst inward as if by an avalanche, and the struggling soldier was hurled to the floor by a blow from Peter Dillard’s ponderous fist.

“Follow me!” said Mr. Deaderick, not in words, but by a quick gesture, as he sprang across the hall, and leaped up the staircase at three or four bounds. Running at full speed half the length of the hall, he threw the full

weight and momentum of his body against the closed door of Marienne's room, carrying it before him, but instantly falling under a sabre stroke, which cut half through, and broke his arm, and laid bare his skull above the left ear. His body had not time to touch the floor, however, before, with the agility of an enraged tiger, the herculean form of Peter Dillard sprang over him. A pistol shot flashed in the sable giant's face; one, two blows from his stalwart arms, like two simultaneous bolts from the same discharge of electricity; two men fell to the floor, and Peter turned to find the third lying across Mr. Deaderick, struggling in death with the bullet in his brain that was intended for himself.

Seizing Marienne, who was lying on the bed in a swoon, he sprang over the two unconscious forms before the door, and, as he bounded down the staircase, he shouted for help. And help was there.

As soon as Peter told mammy of his fears, she sent the entire phalanx of ebony imps, in their abbreviated *togas*, for Uncle George and his stalwarts; and, as they sped across the field of cotton beds, anxious to "do the state some service," and "big with the tidings of war," the violent fluttering of the rear flaps of their airy garments, like a score of stampeded flags of truce, told that the juvenile couriers were terribly in earnest in their efforts to annihilate time and space.

Peter's first shout was answered from both the front and back doors, and a swarm of dusky figures, with glaring eyes and distended nostrils, rushed into the hall.

"Clear de way!" shouted the stalwart man in a phrensy of excitement and rage. "Let me take dis chile to de ole mammy! Uncle George, 'tend to Mr. Deaderick—

dey has done kilt 'im! You men see dat dem in 'tother room don't git away! Drag down dem up stairs, an' tie 'em all together! I'll kill any nigger dat lets one git away! Great God! ef I hadn't dropped my hammer de floors would be greasy wid brains! But bless His holy name, it ain't too late yit! Ef dey has—has hurt dis chile I'll grease de gin saws wid dar haslets. Come on! Come on! Fools, don't you——”

But mammy, who had just entered the hall, seeing that Peter was fast losing control of himself, put her hand over his mouth, and calling his attention to Marienne, pushed him along to the room formerly occupied by Miss Seymour. As soon as they had entered she locked the door and put the key into her pocket. Peter waited until restoratives were applied, and he saw Marienne show signs of returning animation: Then he said:

“I onderstans dat key bisness, ole 'oman; but let me out o' here an' I promises not to do nothin', 'cept Uncle George says so.”

“Gyawge, indeed!” responded the old woman. “Ef Gyawge gits de ole nigger up in him, he's es big a fool es you is.”

“Well, let me out,” said Peter, with some impatience, “an' I won't do nothin,' cept *you* says so.”

“Me! Peter, you's a fool! Go an' sen' dem fokes 'way from here! I's a bigger fool when my dander's up dan you an Gyawge bofe together!”

At this moment a shout reached the room in the voice of one of the young men:

“Bring out de hell-hounds! Let's burn 'em in de fodder stack!”

“Dar! you hear dat?” exclaimed Peter. “De ole nigger is done ris in dem boys! Let me out of here! I don't

mind beaten out dar brains, or cuttin' out dar haslets, but dey shan't be burnt like we was wild Injuns !”

Peter found the four men tied together in the dining-room, as he had ordered. Mr. Deaderick had recovered half-consciousness, and was lying on the bed from which Marienne had been taken, with one of the men and several women looking after his welfare. The doctor had been sent for by the swift-footed couriers with the snowy banners, and men and women were stirring around in a state of the most intense excitement. Not one of them knew anything but that Marienne had been carried, apparently lifeless, from the room and that Mr. Deaderick was very severely wounded. But they whispered surmises, one to another, until surmises became certainties, and certainties grew into an enormity of crimes that made them hunger for vengeance.

He was met by cries of: “We’s gwine to burn ’em up !” “We’s gwine to bury ’em alive !” “We’s gwine to roast ’em in de fodder stack !” etc., etc.

“Hold on, boys !” said Peter, pouring oil on the troubled waters. “Wait till we hears from Aunt Prudence. Ef de ole mammy says de word I speck de bes’ thing’ll be to sink ’em in de Salem Hole. Buried bones tells no tales !”

In the midst of the excitement Fox arrived, riding at full speed. Peter met him at the gate, and after a private talk, during which the negro gesticulated violently, he went into the room where mammy was ministering to Marienne. After being absent a few minutes he returned, and said to the angry crowd :

“Boys, we will let these men go. We don’t want to have our houses burnt and ourselves hounded and shot down like wild beasts. Untie them all, and one of you get the Jersey wagon to take this dead officer along.”

The four men were not seriously hurt. A broken nose or two, and a lot of black and swollen eyes being their chief injuries. Their arms were returned to them, and they rode soberly away, followed by the vehicle carrying their dead officer, who had an ugly dagger wound in his neck, in addition to the bullet in his brain.

After the men had left, and Fox had had time to think deliberately over the occurrence, he mounted his horse again and set out for Barrensville, with the determination to see the commandant in person, lest the men should falsify facts.

The doctor responded promptly to the call for his surgical skill, and after dressing Mr. Deaderick's wounds, and leaving a sedative potion for Marienne, he took mammy aside and said :

“Aunt Prudence, if those people come here again, try to get the folks not to resist anything they may undertake to do, unless it be murder, or a worse crime. God help us ! We must try to make a virtue of necessity, and yield where resistance can only be productive of increased wrongs and outrages.”

Fox was expected back in the early afternoon, as he was always a rapid rider ; but the sun declined till the shadows of the oaks grew long toward the east, and finally reached across the plantation and were lost in early twilight, and yet he had not returned. Twilight grew into darkness, and darkness had shown *Ursa Minor*, gradually rearing until he stood rampant, and still Fox had not returned, nor had the wagon and driver.

“Honey,” said mammy, having tucked Marienne snugly in a bed in her cabin, prepared especially for her, “you must go to sleep. Fox is all right, an’ will be here early in de mornin,’ an’ you mus’ sleep now.”

The poor, nervous, half-crazed girl, worn out by excitement and the long strain of terrible apprehension, finally surrendered to "nature's sweet restorer," and her features lost their rigidity as her thoughts, escaping from the horrors of the present, wandered out into fancy's wide domain. It was thought best by Peter that all should be near together, and in an adjacent cabin to mammy's he watched over the delirious dreams of Mr. Deaderick.

The half-grown moon had sunk behind the darkened West, and *Ursa Minor* had turned upon his back, as if supplicating mercy from his bigger brother, when, hark ! What sounds and sights startle the late watchers ?

A hundred trampling horses ; a hundred liveried men ; a hundred flashing sabres ; but only one voice !

"Death to all who resist ! Deliver up Marienne D'Elfons, Fred Deaderick, and Peter Dillard. Then clear your houses and get out of the way !"

What ordinary persons with black skins would, under the circumstances, think of resistance, remonstrance, or anything but "*sauve qui peut ?*"

Soon the Jersey wagon that carried the corpse to Barrensville, is loaded with a male and a female form, apparently as inanimate as was the corpse, and Peter Dillard, heavily manacled, is tied to the rear of the wagon. What if he felled a dozen men before he was knocked down and bound ? So much the worse for him !

Again, as at Barrensville, columns of black smoke ascend into the vault of heaven ! No outcry is made—no effort put forth ! Roofs and walls, great and small, tumble in, and the crash of the grand mansion sends myriads of sparks to dance among the stars. Men and women gaze in silent awe, while those who, as couriers in the morning, fluttered the white flags of innocence,

roll upon the ground in agony, with their banners drawn over their eyes to shut out the terrible sights.

This chapter should end here, but we will add a few paragraphs, and thus avoid the necessity of writing several chapters of distressful adventure, in order to connect the threads of our narrative.

Weeks, months, years passed, and it was not known positively to the sufferers at “The Oaks,” who were destined yet to suffer greatly, what had been the fate of the three persons taken from them on that terrible night. Authentic news soon came that Fox had been killed, on the next day, in an effort to protect Marienne, whose screams had reached him in the room where he was under guard, as she was being “searched for concealed weapons.” The rumor was that he had knocked down the guard at the door of the room, seized his gun and run the bayonet through another soldier, and was instantly pinned to the cross paneling of the door by half a dozen bayonets through his body. “Crucified!” as the negroes at “The Oaks” expressed it.

Uncle George had rude and hastily-constructed huts put to the chimneys left standing, and in time, by the help of friends and neighbors, the negroes were comfortably fixed again. It became rumored that Peter Dillard had been sent to a Northern prison, under the charge of murder; and that Mr. Deaderick, who, at the time that Fox was killed, also attempted to go to the aid of Marienne, and was knocked senseless and shamefully abused, had become a raving maniac, and had, after several months’ confinement, made his escape to the forest and died of starvation. It was said that his body was devoured by beasts and birds, but that his restless spirit was often seen flitting through the woods, and his maniacal

laugh was heard whenever a Federal soldier died a violent death. Many believed that it was his spirit which afterward became a terror to marauders as the "Phantom Bushwacker," which, or who, so often appeared suddenly, and when least expected, to the startled gaze of the merry spoilsmen, and after firing the contents of a repeating carbine, with deadly effect and demoralizing consequences, would disappear, into the ground it was believed; but no one had ever tarried long enough to speak positively on that point. A few weeks after the surrender at Appomattox, a returning Confederate soldier called at the one solitary hut then left standing at "The Oaks," to seek bread and a night's rest, and informed Uncle George and the partner of his sorrows that after the evacuation of Richmond a half-crazy, fine-looking man, with a terrible scar on the left side of his head, had asked permission to join his company of cavalry. When his name and antecedents were demanded, he replied that he had no name, and was not a native of any particular state or section; but that he could use a sabre, and that his repeating carbine had killed in cold blood thirty-nine Federal soldiers—thirteen each for himself and two friends. When informed that he must give a name, he replied: "Can you give a name and a local habitation to a cosmopolitan ghoul? If so, call me Dead Frederick of Alabama!" He fought with reckless desperation during those last heart-crushing days, and yet there was method in his madness, for though he was conspicuous amid thousands who courted death, which seemed to have become suddenly coy and prudish, he did not needlessly expose himself. A spent fragment of a shell from one of the last guns fired at Appomattox struck him on the old wound on his head, and it having been found that he had become an irrespon-

sible maniac, he was sent to Lynchburg, and thence to the Lunatic Asylum at Staunton.

Peter Dillard also was heard from through a disabled soldier of Morgan's command, who returned home before the close of the war. History has told how the gallant General John Morgan, who, as an invader, with less than two thousand troops, defeated, in the course of nineteen days, more than twenty thousand troops, and paroled nearly six thousand prisoners; and how, after traversing two powerful states, and cutting an entire network of railroads, and frightening millions of good people out of their sober senses, he was made a prisoner, and sent with a number of his officers to—the *felon's prison* at Columbus, Ohio, where he was sheared by a convict as a "bloody invader" and "worse than a felon," though his men had never insulted a woman nor needlessly destroyed one dollar's worth of private property. But history errs slightly respecting the "hair trimmer." He was an ex-convict, but was, at the time, a United States soldier, and one of the special detail to guard "the most dangerous man that ever trod Ohio soil."

While the head shaving was going on General Morgan remarked :

"My good man, you were not reared in this miserable country; you look too sleek and glossy. You were born where the sun shines, and where the blasts of winter do not chill the marrow in one's bones."

"Yes, massa," replied the negro, with a confused grin, "I was borned in Alabamer, an' my ole mistis, an' my ole mammy, an' my wife an' chil'en lives dar now; God bless 'em!"

"Ah! What is your name?"

"Sar? Name? Yes, sar! But I's not gwine to skin

your head like dey told me to. It's uncivilized to treat a gent'man dat way."

"Oh, yes," replied General Morgan, with a laugh, "you must obey orders. I shall not complain if I have my scalp left entire. And if it should chance that my strength lies in my hair, like that of Samson of old, as these people seem to imagine, this discharge of your duty will do your cause more real service than has ever been done by the military exploits of some divisions of your troops. But you forgot to give me your name."

"Name? Yes, sar! Well, sar, it's—it's Peter Dillard."

Poor Peter! He had proven the truth of his axiom that the negroes' minds are like "de water in de river!"

Nothing definite was heard from Marienne. Vague rumor said she had been hanged for the murder of the officer; but a rumor still more vague stated that her fate had been worse than that of death on the gallows. It was said by some, however, that, after the death of Fox, a subordinate officer became the champion of the poor girl, and protected her from further indignities during her imprisonment at Barrensville.



War-swept Fields.

CHAPTER XX.

GETTYSBURG.

*"Look from the turbid South
What floods of flame in red diffusion burst,
Frequent and furious!"*—MALLET'S MUSTAPHA.

*"I have smote in vain
The waves that compass me about, and gain
Upon me in the darkness."*

—E. S. GREGORY'S DE PROFUNDIS.

"PASS UNDER THE FLAG!"

This command was given, and repeated every few moments, to the troops of a passing army, by one of a bevy of sprightly and handsome girls, who had come out from a large building, which, in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, stands on the left side of the street leading north or northeast. The house stands in the suburbs on that side of the town, with its well-shaded lawn some five or six feet above the pavement, and bounded by a stone retaining wall surmounted by a substantial railing. The pavement was crowded with soldiers, tramping steadily and quietly Northward, over whose heads, as they passed, the beautiful speaker of the peremptory command, whose soft voice caused many a ragged, manly bosom to thrill, waved the silken folds of a large United States flag. Only a glance at the bright muskets and tattered garments, the alert eyes and care and hunger-pinched faces of the troops, is sufficient to satisfy one that the world-renowned little "Army of Northern Virginia"—"*Les Miserables*" as

one of the young ladies, who was evidently familiar with Victor Hugo's novels, wittily called them—have for the second time become invaders, and are again about to demonstrate to the obtuse intellects of a peculiar civilization the truth of the universally acknowledged axiom, that the adjective “ruthless” does not belong to the noun “invader,” provided the noun “invader” belongs to the highest order of civilization.

Leaning with his back against the stone retaining wall, and listening to the soft tones of that sweet voice, which reminded him forcibly of the voice which once filled all his soul with melody, Mr. Stewart takes from the breast pocket of his worn and dingy uniform an envelope bearing his name, in the beautiful, round, smooth, unfashionable chirography, which never fails to bring light into his eyes and a sigh from his bosom, and presses it to his lips. But no scrip of a pen came in that envelope. It contained only a printed letter—a noble and patriotic letter, using the word “patriotic” in its best and broadest sense—from a talented statesman, an ex-governor of a Northern state, and a cousin to Miss Florence Seymour, to the *Hartford Times*, condemning the furious passion of the Abolitionists who, he said, were seeking “to hide the hideous deformity of their principles under the captivating name of ‘Friends of the Union,’” and protesting against the unauthorized use of his name as a vice president of one of their meetings, which he had not attended, and would not under any circumstances have countenanced.* The meeting referred to was one of that “Noble Army of Martyrs,” who were so willing and anxious, to sacrifice factory operatives, farm laborers and foreigners, without stint or limit, to preserve the “Sacred

* Ex-Governor Seymour, of New York.

Union,” which bound them to a people whom they hated, but the profits of whose labor they loved; and whose rights, under the written instrument, which was the bond of the “Union,” and should have been considered the only “sacred” thing about it, they had been laboring for generations, with ever-increasing success, to seduce the Northern mind, into antagonizing as “a covenant with hell.”

On this bright June day, Mr. Stewart, being quite unwell, was off duty. As the ambulance, in which he was being transported, entered the southern, or south-western, suburbs of the town, there being a long halt in the line, from some cause unknown to him, he left the vehicle, and sauntered forward, for the purpose of amusing himself by noticing the deportment of the people. The first thing that attracted particular notice, was a tall, lank woman perched upon a pile of scattered lumber, in a vacant lot, with fifteen or twenty children, waving flags, and all singing, at the top of their voices, a patriotic song, with the refrain, “We will live for the Union; we will die for the Union,” etc. The woman, whose face seemed to him, singularly familiar, gesticulated wildly, and seemed to be addressing the sentiments of the song to the curious stragglers who, like himself, had paused to feast their eyes on the fresh faces of innocent childhood. The song being ended, the woman came down from her perch, and invited her large audience of “poor hungry-looking fellows” to “come over, and join the children in their songs.” She assured them that they were fighting on the wrong side, and that if they were tired of fighting for the slaveholders, and would “come over and join the singing, we will find you good homes, with good pay for work, and plenty to eat of the best of the land.” Then, venturing a

little nearer, she seemed to address her remarks particularly to Mr. Stewart, and the young man blushed as he thought of his untidy appearance, and the bullet-torn rent in his hat through which, he felt satisfied, a lock of his uncombed hair was protruding.

“You are ragged and dirty and half starved,” she said, “and why should you continue to fight for your officers? You don’t own slaves, and if they want to keep theirs, let them do their own fighting and starving! Our money is better than theirs, and you can get more of it. Come over! Don’t be bashful; come right along!”

Just at this moment a passing mounted officer exclaimed:

“Move on, boys, the street is getting to be too much crowded here!”

As the larger portion of the crowd commenced to move forward, the woman shouted at the top of her voice:

“That’s just the way you officers keep those poor ignorant creatures in rebellion! You know if you was to read the papers to ’em, or let ’em listen at our songs and speeches, they’d desert you quick enough, and you’d have to go to the gallows! Don’t mind ’em, boys; you are fifty to one; come back!”

This sally caused a shout of laughter and a cheer, which the woman took for applause, and she redoubled her efforts.*

A few minutes after the young master had left, Dick, who supposed him to be still in the ambulance, sauntered along, and, being attracted by the novel sight, he paused and rested his arms upon the fence and his chin upon his arms. After gazing a moment he exclaimed, suddenly:

“Wake snakes! Ef dat ain’t dat same ole cork-screw

* This incident is true in every particular.

'oman! Ef 'taint her, dey was bofe run in de same mole, got de same me-owin' voice an' de same ole cork-screw curls. I never has skelped a abolitioner yet, an' I could git her har es cheap es we gits all de fine guns and sodes! I could git dem cork-screws, an' snatch her baldheaded, an' 'twouldn't be no bloody bisness; not by no means! But Mars' Uncle Robert says we must 'have ourselves, an' I's gwine to do it or bust!”

As Mr. Stewart passed along the principal street, leisurely taking notes and admiring the beauty and vivacity of numerous patriotic matrons and maidens, who crowded the doors, windows and balconies with the stars and stripes, in miniature flags, for head and bosom ornaments, and for pinafores, which latter they waved merrily or angrily, according to the humor of the individual, with the exclamations: “This is the flag to which your allegiance belongs!” “This is the flag you ought to fight under!” etc., he observed, with a feeling of admiration for his people, greater even than their gallantry on the field had ever excited, that not one individual, of the motley-looking throng of rough soldiers, made the rude and impudent reply to which the innocent creatures laid themselves so very liable; and which, he could see, presented itself to the quick wits of thousands, who received it with only a quiet smile, or, perhaps, a whispered remark to a comrade.

Beyond the centre of the town he saw a rollicking young soldier, an under-graduate of a medical college, who, having been taunted by a lot of young men, on a side street, with his ragged and seedy appearance, had forced them to furnish him a full outfit from their own persons, put under arrest and sent back to return the clothing, by a gallant colonel, who, only two weeks before, had received

information that his home in Decatur, Alabama, had been robbed and plundered, and his family maltreated and insulted by Federal soldiers.*

As he leaned against the stone retaining wall, and listened to the sweet music of that thrilling voice, he saw the sturdy soldiers "pass under the flag" in silence, or the merry younger ones jump out into the muddy street to pass around it, and then turn and kiss their hands to the frowning but laughing maidens; while occasionally some particularly agile young man would make a spring upward from the pavement in an effort to grasp the colors, which never failed to call forth a scream from all the merry party above.

As the young man returned the envelope, which had brought him only a political message, to his pocket, he

* Colonel Horace King, commanding the Ninth Alabama Regiment, Wilcox's Brigade. We will also mention, in this connection, that when a part of the army was camped in the suburbs of Fayetteville, Pennsylvania, it became rumored that Brigadier General Turchin and many of his troops resided in that place. This rumor was not true, so far as Turchin himself was concerned, at least, but it had been tauntingly stated to straggling soldiers in the town as a fact, and was believed, despite subsequent denials, and caused a desire on the part of the straggling squads to commit acts of retaliation. A force was immediately sent into the town to preserve order, and military discipline demanded of these, whose homes were being destroyed, to protect the homes—as they believed—of the destroyers. The duty was well and faithfully performed, but military discipline was not entitled to all the credit therefor. Those upon whom the duty devolved received the assistance and influence of all the officers, and many of the privates, who were in the town at the time as visitors or sight-seers. Among these officers one had very recently received tidings of vandalism and villainy, committed upon his home and family in North Alabama, by Turchin's men, of a particularly exasperating nature—Captain John C. Featherston, of Company F, Ninth Alabama, as gallant an officer as there was in the gallant brigade, of which his company and regiment formed a part.

glanced down the street, and saw, approaching in the distance, the noble form of him whose simple presence made every man in that little army feel that he himself was a hero. As he gazed lovingly at the approaching figure, he found himself calculating how long it might be before some man of common mould would stand before that greatest soldier and most modest gentleman of the age, and say in his heart, with plebeian exultation, “I am the greatest of the great ; for you tower above greatness, and I have conquered you !” What did it matter that this quiet, melancholy gentleman, had, year by year, and almost month by month, hurled numberless “greatest captains of the age,” from the very portals of Fame’s temple ? Were they not as plentiful as the leaves in Valombrosa ? What if they were selected from a gradually descending scale of military genius or merit ? Was not each one put upon a rapidly ascending scale of chances of success ? And was it not susceptible of mathematical demonstration, that the time must come soon, when this gallant little army shall be so depleted and enfeebled by death upon the field, devastation of the land, and refusal to exchange prisoners, that some one “greatest captain” must of necessity beat his awkward way beyond the portals and into the temple, and substantiate to gaping ignorance his right to the title so often bestowed and so often lost ?

“*Pass under the flag !*” is again ordered by the flute-like voice to a party of youngsters, who had fallen out of the ranks one by one, and were standing in the muddy street admiring the maidens, and laughing at the skirmish of wit continually kept up between the younger veterans and the “crinoline battalion,” who held the fort so beautifully.

“Pass under the flag, you dirty, grinning rebels!” is ordered by a different voice; but, instantly the musical voice says in gentle reproof:

“Oh, Abigail! Do not insult the poor fellows! I am sure they are nice looking and manly, if their clothes are a little queer; and they are so good-natured. Your papa said they would throw mud and stones at us, but not one has made even a rude remark, and many have taken off their hats, or touched them to the old flag, or to us. I think they are just splendid, and we are having such a jolly good time!”

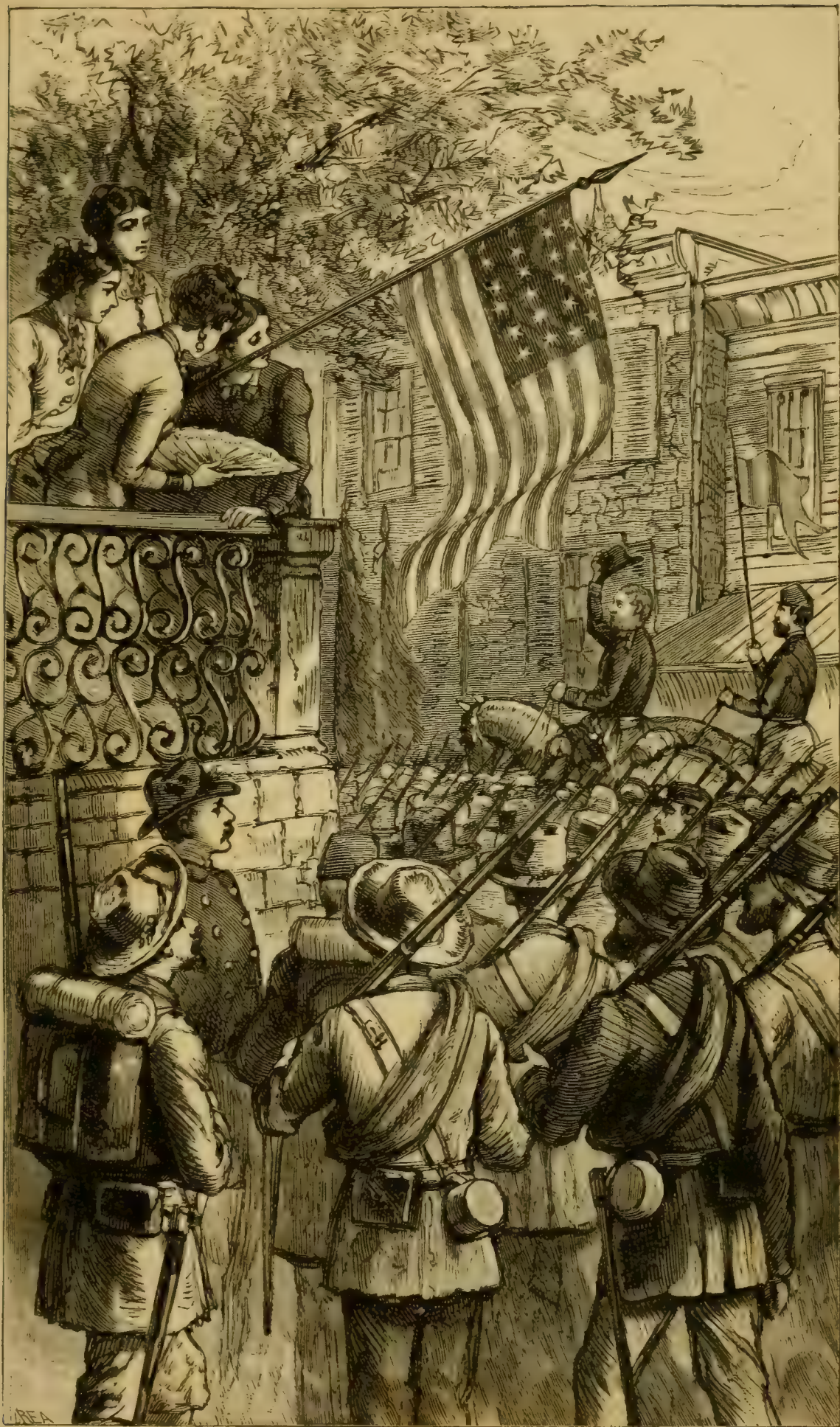
“Oh, girls!” she exclaimed, after a pause, “look at that grand, old officer on the gray horse! He’s a general, I know; and I’ll be bound, he will salute the flag! If so, he’ll make the ninth horseback officer.”

The folds of the banner were given an extra flourish, and as General Lee came nearly opposite, he raised his arm with that peculiarly majestic motion, which hundreds of his officers vainly essayed to imitate, and taking his soft felt hat by the crown, he raised it perpendicularly a few inches above his head and remained uncovered until he had passed.

“Oh, girls!” exclaimed the young lady, with great enthusiasm, forgetting to raise the banner which she had lowered in salute, till it flapped in the faces of the men passing below; “isn’t he just magnificent! Don’t you wish he belonged to us? Let’s ask some of them who he is!”

“That is the gentleman whom we call ‘Uncle Robert,’” said Mr. Stewart, stepping out from the wall, and for the first time attracting the attention of the young ladies. “It is General Lee.”

“Not Robert E. Lee, the commander of the army?”



"Pass Under the Flag."

“The same.”

“Oh, girls!” exclaimed the young lady again, fixing her eager gaze on the receding figure; “it is the great Lee! What wouldn’t you give for his autograph! And he is the terrible Lee, with those sad, beautiful eyes!” *

“He is the courtly Lee who saluted your banner, which I, a ruthless invader, have captured!” laughed the young man, as he wound his hand into the drooping folds of the silken emblem.

“Oh, dear!” exclaimed the young lady in alarm, pulling with all her strength at the flagstaff, “you will not take it from me! Oh, I know you will not! The other men have all been so good, and I drooped it in salute to your general!”

“All is fair in war!” quoted the young man with a laugh. “I make it a rule to capture these, wherever I find them, unless the opposing force is too heavy. But as this is in fair hands, I fancy it would not be improper for me to accept a heavy ransom.”

*This incident is strictly true in every particular, as are all those stated to have been witnessed by Mr. Stewart.

We will embrace this opportunity to deny the truthfulness of a little incident, said to have occurred at Frederick, Maryland, and which has been embalmed in verse, by the poet, Whittier. Mrs. Barbara Frietchie, of that town, may have had a flag floating from her attic window fired at, but if so, the act was done by stragglers, and the incident never came to the knowledge of “Stonewall” Jackson, and was never heard of by any of his officers, or by any officer of Lee’s army, until it was read in Whittier’s Poems. Had Mr. Whittier himself ever been a “bold soldier boy,” he could not have been humbugged, by some Captain Jinks, into the ludicrous blunder of making a dignified general officer “halt the dust-brown ranks,” and order them to fire upon anything, not to speak of a harmless piece of bunting, floating over the humble dwelling of an old woman; and, only the extremely gullible could believe such a story of the stately and lofty-minded Jackson.

“ Well, there ; you can have that for a trophy,” said the young lady, dropping a handkerchief of delicate fabric upon his shoulder. “ Will that do ? ”

“ I prefer something less tangible.”

“ A compliment ? Well ; tell your sweetheart, when you write, that a Yankee girl says, she has a very handsome and gallant lover.”

“ Too thin for a masked battery ! ” laughed the young man, quoting army slang.

“ And that your general is the sweetest-looking *old* gentleman that she ever saw.”

“ Pretty good, despite the italics, but —— ”

“ Well, there ! ” exclaimed the young lady, laughingly throwing a couple of kisses from the pink tips of her fingers.

“ That will have to do,” laughed the young man, releasing the banner ; “ as I am afraid to storm the heights, and capture them, without the wings.” And tossing a kiss to each of the “ color guard,” and several to the bearer, he “ passed under the flag ” and resumed the march.

At the corner, he turned to wave his “ trophy,” and received a shower of winged kisses in return.

A few days later, that “ trophy ” was torn from the breast pocket in which he deposited it, by a discharge of grape-shot, which blew unburnt powder into the flesh of the young man’s face and hands, and hurled him, a black and bleeding mass, against an adjacent boulder, on the heights of Gettysburg, where his command had fought its slow and determined way, step by step, until it charged up into the very jaws of destruction.

Histories have painted pictures of the battle of Gettysburg, but how cold to him who helped to storm the heights,

sound the phlegmatic words of even the enthusiastic Pollard :

"It was thought at one time, the day was won. Wilcox's Alabama, and Wright's Georgia brigades, almost gained the ridge, but reinforcements reached the Federal forces at that point and, unsupported by the remainder of their division, they failed to drive the enemy from his stronghold." *

We will give an extract from a letter, written by Brigadier General Conrad—our old acquaintance of the Peninsula, Captain Frank Conrad—to his cousin, Miss Florence Seymour, giving a picture of the scene, from the Federal standpoint, on top of the mountain, which, if less concise and comprehensive than Mr. Pollard's, is rather more graphic. [This is a genuine letter, which has been published before, and is here somewhat abridged.] :

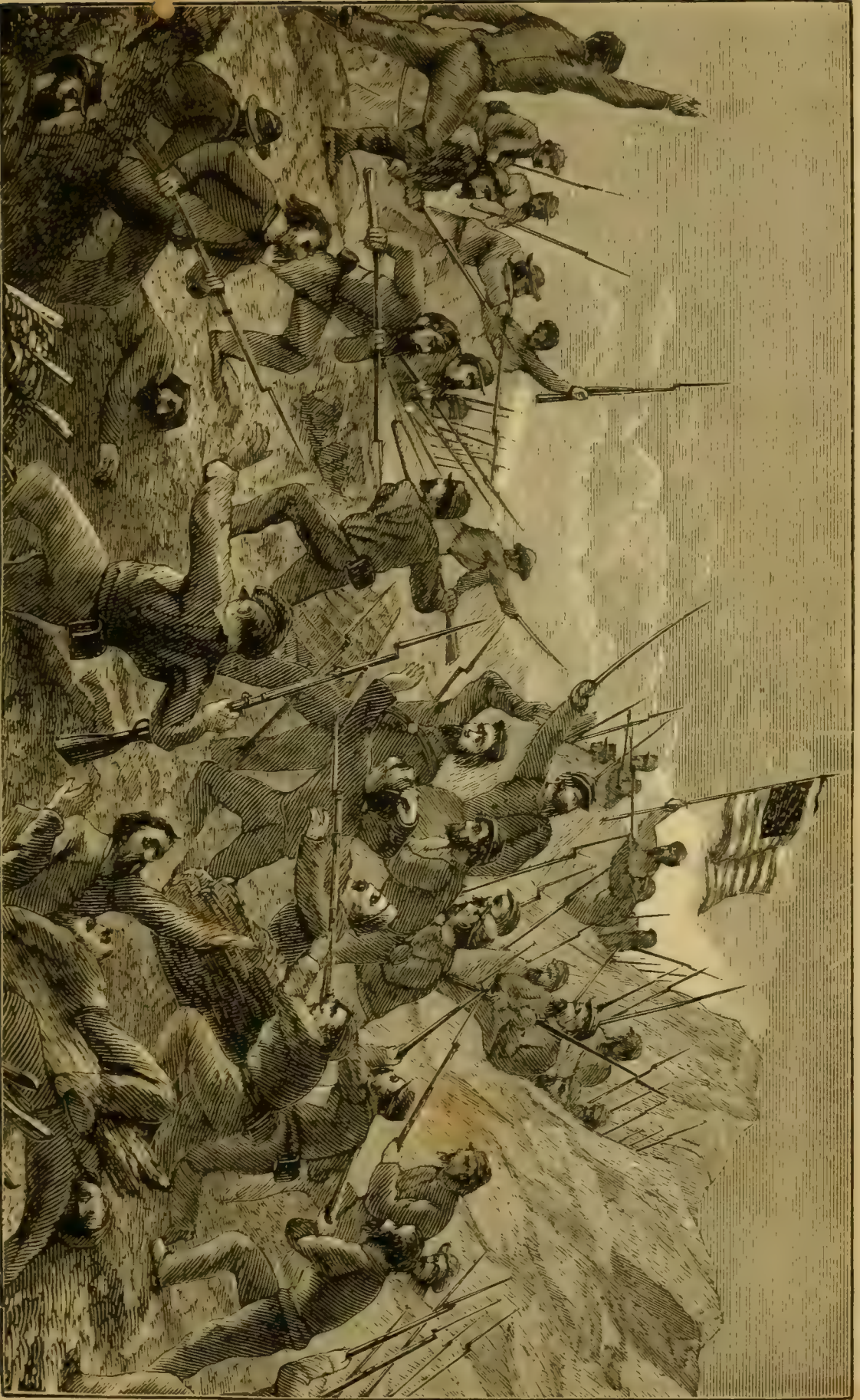
"Every cartridge box had been emptied again and again, and a fourth of the brigade had melted away, in dead, wounded, and missing. Not a shout is heard in the whole brigade, for we know we are being driven, foot by foot, and that when we break back once more, the line will go to pieces, and the enemy will pour through the gap. We have appealed for help, and finally it comes. Six guns, withdrawn from some other position to save ours, come thundering over stones and fallen trees to our aid. In a moment they are in position, the horses are hurrying away and the ammunition boxes are open. The command is sent up and down the line : 'Give them one more volley, and fall back to support the guns.' It is scarcely done when, boom ! boom ! boom ! opens the battery, and jets of flame leap down and scorch the green trees, under which we fought and despaired. The shattered, old brigade has

* E. A. Pollard's "Lost Cause," quoted from memory.

a chance to breathe, for the first time in three hours, as we form a line of battle behind the guns and lie down.

“Every gun is using short fuse shells. The ground shakes and trembles ; the roar shuts out all sound from three hundred other guns that are bellowing along the ridges, and the shells go shrieking into the swamp, to cut trees short off, to mow great gaps in the bushes, to hunt out and shadow and mangle men, until their corpses cannot be recognized as human. A tornado howls through the forest, followed by billows of fire, and yet men live through it ! Aye ; and press forward to capture the battery ! Amid the fierce shrieks and screams of shell and shrapnel, their feeble human shouts are heard, as they climb up over boulders and fallen timber, to beard in their lair the howling demons of death ! Shells are changed for grape and canister, and the guns are served with such rapidity that all reports blend into one mighty roar. Through the smoke climb up a swarm of men. It is not a battle line, but a mob, desperate enough to bathe their bayonets in the flame of the guns, which leap from the ground, almost, as they are depressed on the foe ! Shrieks and screams and shouts blend into one awful and steady cry. Twenty men out of the battery are down and the firing is interrupted. The survivors prepare for a last round. The foe are not ten feet away when it is given. That discharge picks living men off their feet, and hurls them, black and bleeding masses of flesh and bones, into the swamp below. But the battery is taken !

“Up now, boys ; the enemy are among the guns ! There is silence a few moments for deliberate aim and then a flash and mighty roar of musketry and a rush forward with the bayonet. For what ? Neither on the right nor left nor in front of us is there a yelling foe ! Not even a



Being Driven.



shriek or groan tells of a living enemy ! Death’s harvest has been reaped with a thoroughness that is appalling ! The wheels of the guns cannot move until the blockade of dead is removed. Men cannot pass from caisson to gun without climbing over winrows of dead. Every gun and wheel is smeared with blood ; every foot of grass has its horrible stain. Burial parties saw murder where historians will see only glory !”

“General,” exclaimed a young officer, approaching Brigadier General Conrad, a few minutes after the occurrences, which we have permitted him to describe above, “the Rebels *have* got niggers in their army ; this sword was taken from one who was an officer and fell just in front of the battery.”

“Eh ? What !” exclaimed the general, springing up from the train of a gun carriage, upon which he was sitting, sadly contemplating the harvest of death around him. “That is my old sword, presented by the ladies of —— church, and which I gave up when captured at Williamsburg. Negro, did you say ? Poor Dick ! I thought he was too sensible to expect to find an ‘Abolitioner’ in such a place as this. Take me to him.”

The supposed negro was found lying against a smooth boulder, as if taking needed rest, with his head bound in the ample folds of a red cotton handkerchief, in the absence of a hat, and his chin resting on his chest. The general hastily removed the handkerchief, exposing a head of dark matted hair and a broad white forehead.

“My God !” he exclaimed, as he fell upon his knees and seized the body of his friend in his arms. “It is Stewart, of Alabama ! Quick ! run for the surgeon—there may be life in him—and bring a litter ! Poor fellow !” added the officer, with tearful eyes, as he laid his

warm cheek against the cold, clammy face of his political foe ; “ how earnest must have been your devotion to the cause which prompted you to defy death in so terrible a stronghold as this ! ”

While General Conrad is having the inanimate form of his friend conveyed to headquarters, we will take just one glance into the “ swamp ” below, at a picture presented by a foreigner. The *London Times*, of September, 1863, contained a letter from Mr. Russell, its war correspondent, in which the following is narrated :

“ Brigadier General Wilcox rushed up to General Lee, wringing his hands, with tears in his eyes, and exclaimed : “ General Lee, my poor boys have been butchered ! We were not supported, and I have not a corporal’s guard left ! ” To which General Lee replied : “ I got you into this, general, and you must now do what you can to get me out of it ! ” *

A few hours after the quiet stars, whose serene beauty never fails to make sentient man deplore the fierce passions in his frail bosom, had come to look down in sadness upon the scene of death, a Federal soldier, on the ridge, approached his officer with a prisoner.

“ Captain,” said he, “ here is a nigger soldier—a color sergeant, he says—whom we found groping about among the Rebel dead.”

“ Are you a deserter, sir, from the Rebel side ; or were you robbing the dead ? ” asked the officer, sternly.

“ No, boss ; I’s above dat,” replied the negro, humbly and sadly. “ I’s a poor orfin nigger, widout no company, an’ no reg’ment nor nothin’.”

“ Were you robbing the dead ; or what brought you here ? ”

“ Dey all lef’ me in de bottom, an’ said dey was gwine

* Quoted from memory.

to have dese big guns on de mountain, or sleep de las' sleep 'mongst dese cliffs ; an' dar ain't but two or three of 'em got back crippled and scyared up.”

“But why should *you* come up here ?”

“I's been perusin' 'roun' huntin' for my young marster, sar,” replied the negro, as tears ran down his cheeks.

“Perhaps so,” said the officer, doubtingly. “Let's see if you may chance to have any papers or letters about your clothes.”

“Papers ! Letters !” exclaimed Dick, looking wildly around, as he thought of Marienne's letter sewed in the breast pocket of his buckskin jacket ; “no, boss, you can't see dat.”

“What ! The devil ! Call the sergeant ! This man is a spy ! Hold him !” shouted the officer, springing at Dick, as he jerked loose from the soldier and bounded off into the darkness with the fleetness of a deer, closely pursued by his captors. The poor negro might have made his escape had he not fallen over a log, and been mounted the next instant by both of his pursuers. Finding himself powerless, with two strong, active men holding him upon the ground, an idea occurred to him to use his wits as a last resort in the emergency.

“Boss,” said he, ceasing the struggle, “does you know Mars' Cap'n Conrad ?”

“Conrad ? What of him ?”

“Me an' him is ole cronies, an' ef he was here he wouldn't let you treat me dis way.”

“Where did you ever see or hear of him ?”

“I tuck him prisoner at Williamsburg, an' got his sode an' his flag and everything ; an' didn't fling him down an' sarch his pockets, an' rip open his jacket nor nothin' ; but treat him like a gent'man.”

“Is your name Dick Anderson Stewart?”

“How does you know dat?” exclaimed Dick, making an effort to see if his jacket pocket had not been rifled.

“Why, I know you. We had a talk once across the Warwick river near Yorktown about that “old rooster” at Barrensville. Have you scalped an ‘abolitioner’ yet?”

“No, boss,” replied the poor fellow, as he arose and brushed the dirt from his clothing, “but dar frens is done tored de heart clean out o’ me. Does you know Mars’ Chyarles Styode?” and again tears stole down his cheeks.

“Yes ; I saw him an hour ago. He isn’t dead yet, Dick. Take him to the general’s headquarters, Shultz,” and the officer turned away, as he felt a flush of sympathy for the faithful creature swell the veins of his face.

Within ten minutes Dick’s capture had been reported, and he was kneeling by the camp-bed on which lay the young master ; had been recognized by him and was pouring out his soul in the most devout and earnest prayer of his life.

There will be neither pleasure nor anything to warm the heart or strengthen the faith in the civilizing power of some phases of Christianity, to be gained by following Mr. Stewart to prison.

“RETALIATION !” Ah ! that miserable word which no Christian people should suffer to dictate a policy or course to be pursued, caused, during a period of more than two long years, thousands of gallant hearts to sink, despair and die that had never been made to quail before thundering batteries flanked by glittering bayonets !

And, as practiced in Northern prisons, it was retaliation for what ? For the inability of a gallant people, who, in all their history had never been known to do a wantonly



After the Battle.



cruel act, half exhausted and half starved, with the outside world shut off from them, to provide sugar, which not one in a hundred citizens could get; coffee, which even the wealthiest families had forgotten the taste of; tea, which was imported only in the pockets of spies; medicines, which could only be obtained from Federal purveyors by force of arms; blankets and clothing, which, for the greater part, like arms, could only be gathered from battle-fields, as the Israelites gathered manna; and other things comfortable to human creatures, and usually considered as necessities of life, but which were equally scarce and unattainable? Retaliation for the inability of the Confederates to provide these things for hundreds and thousands upon thousands of prisoners of whom they could not get rid on any terms, and who were much less dangerous to the life of the Confederacy as soldiers in the field than as consumers of meat and bread in her prisons; that meat and bread, the scant rations of which were issued to the “interior subjugating army” in as full weight, and with greater regularity than was vouchsafed to the Confederate soldiers on the tented field.

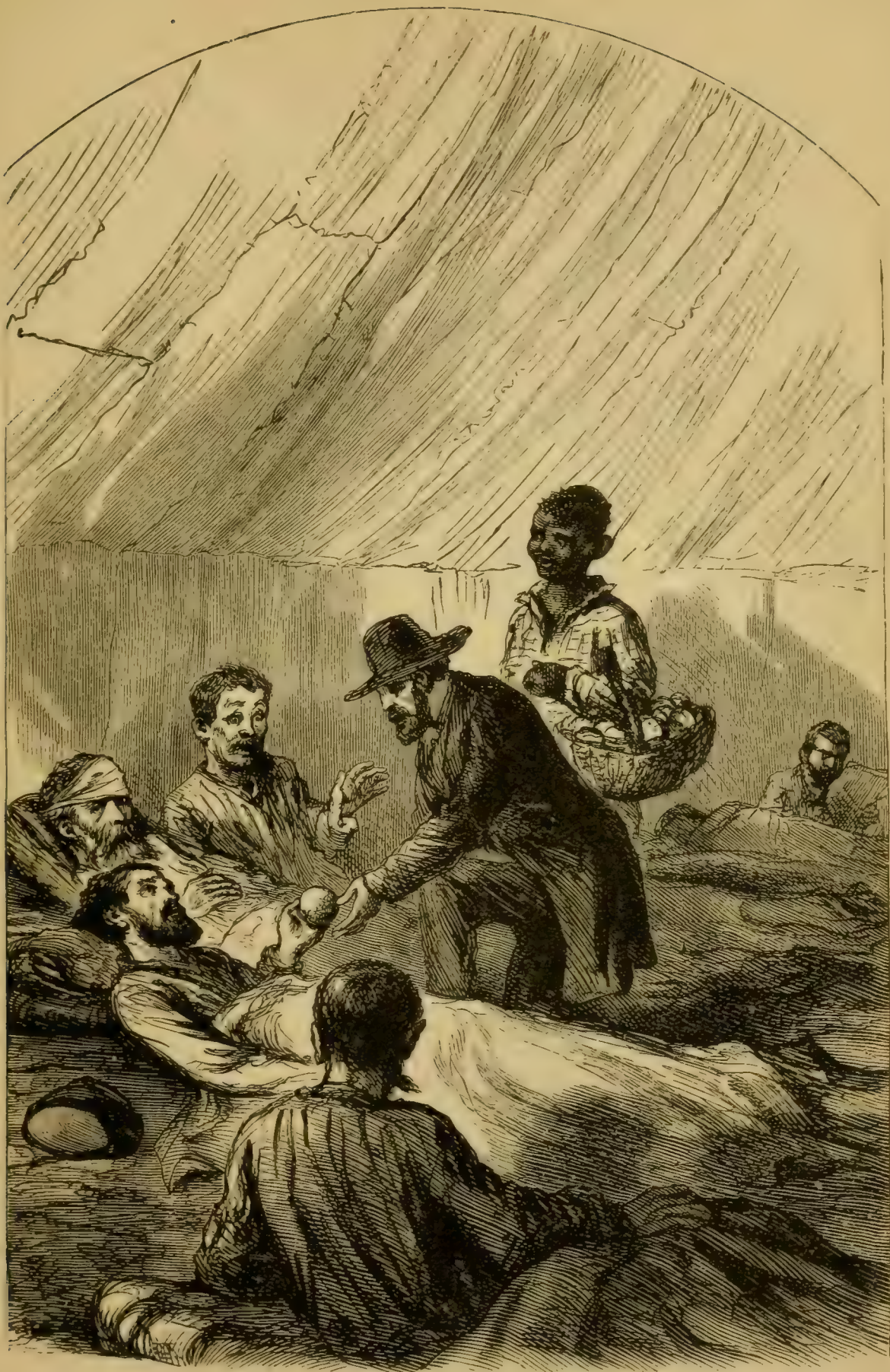
If the old aphorism that “All is fair in war” be true, then, of course, it is fair to eat and worry a foe into subjection; but no creature, whose civilization is founded on Christianity, will admit that it is fair, while the slow but sure process is going on, to starve and freeze the luckless prisoners taken from the victim, and seek to excuse it on the plea of RETALIATION!

One poor creature, who commanded a Southern prison, was hanged because his amiability was supposed to have been not so great as was the poverty of his Government. Could equal “justice,” as therein displayed, have been meted out to the gentle spirits on the other side, who

served their country by originating and enforcing the policy of retaliation, there would have been a line of gibbets in that country from Maine to the Rocky Mountains.

General Conrad, when his friend became convalescent, volunteered to procure for him, if possible, similar kindnesses to those which had been extended to himself at Richmond; but he informed him that, as no member of his family had ever been an Abolitionist, and not one was even a Republican, they and their friends could exert but little influence, except on the fields of battle. As was anticipated, his influence accomplished nothing with the authorities in the rear, but his money, which was sent regularly, and was—through Dick's instrumentality in lending himself to an amiable fraud—gladly received, went far toward ameliorating his condition, as a passive object of retaliation.

What a powerful and effective combination did Mr. Stewart's nearer view of Federal affairs reveal to his mind! How skillfully were good, bad and indifferent linked together, assigned appropriate and congenial tasks, and made to work, all toward the one desired end—success! The good and the brave, with comparatively few of the others, composed the fighting force; the bad and the vicious—cowards necessarily—composed the force to occupy or overrun conquered territory, and the indifferent and skulking; No! The gentle spirits who had, by exciting sectional hatred, built up the great Republican party out of the once despised Abolition party—the gentle spirits whose tender sensibilities would not suffer them to look upon the blood of the swine upon which they fed—left to fill contracts, fire the temperate heart, persecute those that were too temperate to be fired, shout for the Union, manufacture



Stewart under Conrad's care.

sentiment, boss prisons, enforce rigid retaliation—one blanket where the thermometer stands thirty degrees below zero, for one blanket where the thermometer rarely falls to the freezing point—manufacture false stories of "Southern atrocities," blow the horn of the nation and abuse all the world except "the best government the world ever saw." If we have failed to mention any of the dirty "chores" of "The Nation" they too were performed by these gentle spirits who distilled inspiration from the moral garbage on which they fed.

And when we consider that in addition to all these forces, a large part of the surplus population of the civilized world was put through the seive of battle to furnish a new and a cunningly and diabolically-conceived and a previously-untried method of warfare—a force of able and efficient eaters quartered in Southern prisons, and consuming the rations which would have given physical strength to the soldiers in the field—can it be wondered at that the patient Lee displayed his wonderful genius, and his ragged and starving little army astonished the world with its deeds of valor, all in vain?



Harvested.

CHAPTER XXI.

A BORROWED PICTURE.

*"I met a fool
Who laid him down and basked him in the sun."*—SHAKSPEARE.

*"We * * * must not scorn
The teachings of the idiot born."*—ELIZA COOK.

IN this sublunary world of ours the wise people know that there are fools, and there are FOOLS ; and that the most foolish of all fools are the would-seem candid Fools who tell a damaging truth on themselves as a sort of collateral guaranty that the falsehood which they tell on a neighbor is not devoid of truth. The fool of this class is given to garrulity, and when his folly leads him to crawl into print, he is entitled to the honor of being considered the Prince of Fools. Gentle reader, please bear in mind that this writer is in the audience-chamber and not in the confessional.

While we are waiting to ascertain if "retaliation" shall starve or freeze our hero, or only fit him to return home and die of consumption, or of general debility, or to live on, drawn and crippled by rheumatism, we will present a picture which was limned by a FOOL who did an ERRAND, and then became a "writer of books ;" but who, with all of his writing, forgot to tell the reader whether his object was to excuse or to boast of his folly. And yet he was no common fool, but an artist who painted magic pictures, and endowed them with the peculiar

power to make the reader laugh or weep according to the quality and degree of his civilization. Before presenting the picture which we have selected, we will let the artist introduce himself as :

“The Captain of the Peru Invincibles, which constituted Company B of an infantry regiment that did an incredible amount of boasting at the outset, a marvelous amount of running soon after, and a reasonable amount of fighting still later in the Civil War.”

But bear in mind, gentle reader, that this reasonable or unreasonable amount of fighting was done in that “celebrated march” of a great army to—the sea! In that wonderful “march” the Peru Invincibles, with the balance of the terrible hosts, proved their invincibility by fearlessly charging serried ranks of rail fences, bristling *chevaux-de-frise* of yard and garden palings, and panoplied hosts of pigs and poultry, to say nothing of the warlike mules, crows, “garden sass,” pantries, silver chests, jewelry, “niggers,” women, children, smokehouses and buried treasures that infested that whole country from Atlanta to the sea. But we are giving a little charcoal sketch of our own instead of presenting the *chef d’oeuvre* by the master. We draw the curtain.

“First the factory [belonging to Colonel Desmit, a rebel] and the thousands of bales carefully placed in store near by were given to the flames. * * * During the ensuing night he [whose cotton had been destroyed] arrived at his destination, where he found everything in confusion and affright. It was a vast collection of most valuable stores. It was one of the sheet anchors which the prudent and far-seeing Potestatem Desmit” [why should the Puritan artist have imposed such an outlandish name upon his typical Southern Christian?] “had thrown

out to windward in anticipation of a coming storm. For half a mile along the banks of the little stream, which was just wide enough to float a loaded batteau, the barrels of resin and pitch and turpentine were piled, tier upon tier, hundreds and thousands upon thousands of them. Potestatem Desmit looked at them and shuddered at the desolation which a torch would produce in an instant.

* * * But he had great confidence in himself, his own powers of persuasion and diplomacy. He would try them once more, and would not fail to make them serve for all they might be worth, to save this hoarded treasure."

* * * * *

Potestatem Desmit had his carriage geared up and went coolly forth to meet the invaders. He had heard much of their savage ferocity [as exercised toward the *panoplied* hosts of pigs, poultry, *et cetera*], and was by no means ignorant of the danger which he ran in thus going voluntarily into their clutches. Nevertheless, he did not falter. He had great reliance in his personal presence. So he dressed with care ; and arrayed in clean linen, and a suit of the finest broadcloth, then exceedingly scarce in the Confederacy, and with his snowy hair and beard, his high hat, his hands crossed over a gold-headed cane, and gold-mounted glasses upon his nose, he set out upon his mission. The night before he had prudently removed from the place every drop of spirits, except a small demijohn of old peach-brandy, which he put under the seat of his carriage, intending therewith to regale the highest official whom he should succeed in approaching, even though it should be the dreaded Sherman himself.

He had proceeded perhaps half a mile, when his carriage was all at once surrounded by a motley crew of curiously-dressed, but well-armed ruffians, whose very

appearance disgusted and alarmed him. With oaths and threats the lumbering chariot, which represented in itself no little of respectability, was stopped. The appearance of such a vehicle upon the sandy road of the pine woods, coming directly toward the advancing column, struck the “bummers” with surprise. They made a thousand inquiries of the frightened driver, and were about to remove and appropriate the sleek span of carriage-horses, when the occupant of the carriage, opening the window, thrust out his head, and with a face flaming with indignation, ordered them to desist, bestowing upon them a volley of epithets, beginning with “rascals,” and running as far into the language of abuse as his somewhat heated imagination could carry him.

“Hello, Bill!” said the bumper who was unfastening the right-wheeler, as he looked back and saw the red face, framed into a circlet of white hair and beard. “Just look at this old sunflower, will you? I guess the old bird must think he commands the brigade. Ha! ha! ha! I say, old fellow, when did you leave the ark?”

“And was Noah and his family well when you bid ’em good-by?” queried another.

This levity and ridicule were too much for Colonel P. Desmit to endure. He leaned out of the carriage window, and shaking his gold-headed cane at the mirthful marauders, denounced them in language fearful in its impotent wrath.

“Take me to General Sherman, you rascals! I want to see the general!” he yelled over and over again.

“The hell you do! Well, now, mister, don’t you know that the general is too nervous, to see company to-day? He’s just sent us on ahead a bit to say to strangers that he’s compelled to refuse all visitors to-day. He gets that

way sometimes, does 'Old Bill,' so you mustn't think hard of him, at all."

"Take me to the general, you plundering pirates!" vociferated the enraged colonel. "I'll see if a country gentleman traveling in his own carriage, along the highway is to be robbed and abused in this manner!"

"Robbed, did he say?" queried one with the unmistakable brogue of an Irishman. "Faith, it must be that the gintleman has somethin' very important along wid him in the carriage that's he's gittin' so excited about; and it's meself that'll not see the gintleman imposed on, sure." This with a wink at his comrades. Then to the occupant of the carriage: "What did your honor say might be your name, now? It's very partickler the gineral is about instructin' us to ax the names of thim that's wantin' an' introduction to him, ye know?"

The solemnity of this address, half deceived the irate Southron, and he answered, with dignity:

"Desmit—Colonel Potestatem Desmit, of Horsford County, sir."

"Ah, d'ye hear that, b'ys? Faith, it's a kurnel it is ye've bin a sthopin' here upon the highway. Sure, it may be that he's goin' to the general wid a flag of truce, belike."

"I do wish to treat with the general," said Desmit, thinking he saw a chance to put in a favorable word.

"An' d'ye hear that, b'ys? Shure the gintleman wants to trate the gineral. Faith, it'll be right glad the auld b'y'll be of a dhrap of somethin' good down here in the pine woods."

"Can I see the general, gentleman?" asked Desmit, with a growing feeling that he had taken the wrong course to accomplish his end. The crowd of bummers constantly grew larger. They were mounted upon horses and mules,

jacks and jennets, and one of them had put a McClellan saddle and a gag-bit upon one of the black-polled cattle which abound in that region, and which ambled along easily and briskly, with his rider's feet just brushing the low “poverty-pines” which grew by the roadside. They wore all sorts of clothing. The blue and the gray were already peacefully intermixed in the garments of most of them. [The gray had come out of “captured” trunks, not from the backs of defeated rebels!] The most grotesque variety prevailed, especially in their head-gear, which culminated in the case of one who wore a long barrel-shaped slatted sun-bonnet, made out of spotted calico. They were boisterous, and even amusing, had they not been well armed, and apparently without fear or reverence for any authority or individual. [How half a dozen of the “Barrensville skirmishers” would have made them “crawl out o’ them clo’s” and root up the “poverty-pines,” in panic-stricken terror.] For the present, the Irishman was evidently in command, by virtue of his witty tongue.

“Can ye see the ginerál, kurnel?” said he, with the utmost apparent deference, “av coorse ye can, sir, only it’ll be necessary for you to leave your carriage, an’ the horses and nagur here, in care of these gintlemen, while I takes ye to the ginerál meself.”

“Why can I not drive on?”

“Why can’t ye dhrive? Is it a kurnel ye is, an’ don’t know that? Sure the cavalry an’ the arthillery, an’ the caysons, an’ one thing an’ another of that kind would soon crush a charyot like that to flinders, ye know.”

“I cannot leave my carriage,” said Desmit.

“Mein Gott, shust hear him now!” said a voice on the other side, which caused Desmit to turn with a start. A

bearded German, with a pair of myoptic glasses adding their glare to the peculiar intensity of the short-sighted gaze, had climbed upon the opposite wheel, during his conversation with Pat, and leaning half through the window, was scanning carefully the inside of the carriage. He had already one hand on the demijohn of peach brandy, upon which the owner's hopes so much depended. *Potes-tatem Desmit*, was no coward, and his gold-headed cane made the acquaintance of the Dutchman's pate, before he had time to utter a word of protestation.

It was all over in a minute, then. There was a rush and a scramble. The old man was dragged out of his carriage, fighting manfully, but vainly. Twenty hands laid hold upon him. The gold-headed cane vanished; the gold-mounted glasses disappeared; his watch leaped from his pocket, and the chain was soon dangling at the fob of one of the still laughing marauders. Then one insisted that his hat was unbecoming for a colonel, and a battered and dirty infantry cap, with a half-obliterated corps badge and regimental number, was jammed down on his gray hairs; he was required to remove his coat, and then another took a fancy to his vest. The one who took his coat, gave him in exchange a very ragged, greasy and altogether disgusting cavalry jacket, much too short, and not large enough to button. The carriage was almost torn in pieces, in the search for treasure. Swords [of line, field, staff or general officers?] and bayonets were thrust through the paneling; the cushions were ripped open, the cover torn off, and every possible hiding-place examined. Then, thinking it must be about his person, they [why doesn't the invincible Peruvian use the *first* person plural?] compelled him to take off his boots and stockings. In their stead, a pair of almost soleless shoes

were thrown him by some one who appropriated the boots.

Meantime, the Irishman had distributed the contents of the demijohn, after having filled his own canteen. Then there was great hilarity. The taste of the “colonel” was loudly applauded; his health was drunk, and it was decided to move on with him in charge. The “bummer” who rode the polled ox had, in the meantime, shifted his saddle to one of the carriage-horses, and kindly offered the steer to the “colonel.” One who had come on foot had already mounted the other horse. The driver performed a last service for his master, now pale, tearful, and trembling at the insults and atrocities he was called on to undergo, by spreading one of the carriage cushions over the animal’s back, and helping the queerly-habited potentate to mount his insignificant steed. It was better than marching through the hot sand on foot, however.

When they reached the little hamlet which had grown up around his collection of turpentine distilleries, they saw a strange sight. The road which bore still Southward, was full of blue-coated soldiers, who marched along with the peculiar swinging gait which marked the army that “went down to the sea.” Beyond the low bridge, under a clump of pines which had been spared for shade, stood a group of horsemen, one of whom read a slip of paper, or rather shouted its contents to the soldiery as they passed, while he flourished the paper above his head. Instantly the column was in an uproar. Caps were thrown into the air; voices grew hoarse with shouting; frantic gesticulation, tearful eyes and laughter, yells, insane antics, queer combinations of sacriligious oaths and absurd embraces, were everywhere to be seen and heard.

“Who is that?” asked Desmit of the Irishman, near

whom he had kept, pointing to the leading figure of the group.

"Faith, kurnel, that is Gíneral ———. Would ye like an introduction, kurnel?"

"Yes, yes," said Desmit, impatiently.

"Thin come wid me. Sure I'll give ye one, an tell him ye sent him a dhrink of auld peach to celebrate the good news with. Come along, thin!"

Just as they stepped upon the bridge, Desmit heard a lank hoosier ask:

"What's in them bar'ls?"

And some one answered:

"Turpentine."

"Hooray!" said the first, "a bonfire!"

"Hurry! hurry!" Desmit cried to his guide.

"Come on thin, auld gintleman. It's meself that'll not go back on a man that furnishes a good dhram for so joyful an occasion."

They dismounted, and, pressing their way through the surging mass on the bridge, approached the group under the pines.

"Gíneral," said the Irishman, taking off the silk hat, which Desmit had worn and waving it in the air; gíneral, I have the honor to introduce to ye an auld gintleman—one of the vera fust families—that's come out to mate ye, an' begs that ye'll taste just a dhrap av the finest auld pache that ivver ran over yer tongue, jist to cilebrate this vera joyful occasion."

He waved his hat toward Desmit, and handed up the canteen at once. The act was full of the audacity of his race, but the news had overthrown all sense of discipline. The officer even lifted the canteen to his lips, and no doubt finding Pat's assertion, as to its quality to be true,

allowed a reasonable quantity of its aromatic contents to glide down his throat, and then handed it to one of his companions.

“General ! General !” shrieked Desmit in desperation, as he rushed forward.

“What do you want, sir ?” said the officer, sternly.

There was a rush, a crackle, and a still louder shout.

Both turned and saw a tongue of red flame with black, sooty tip, leap suddenly skyward. The great mass of naval stores was fired, and no power on earth could save a barrel of them. Desmit staggered to the nearest tree, and faint and trembling, watched the flame. How it raged ! How the barrels burst and the liquid flame poured over the ground, and into the river ! Still it burned ! The whole earth seemed aflame ! How the black billows of heavy smoke poured upward hiding the day ? The wind shifted and swept the smoke-wave over above the crowding, hustling, shouting column. It began to rain, but under the mass of heavy smoke the group of pines stood dry.

And still, out of the two openings in the dark pines, upon the other side of the stream, poured the two blue-clad, steel-crowned columns ! Still the staff officer shouted the glad tidings : “*Lee—surrendered—unconditionally !*” [Veracious dispatch !] Still waved aloft the dispatch ! Still the boundless forests rang with shouts ! Still the fierce flame raged, and from the column which had gone into the forest beyond came back the solemn chant, which sounded at that moment like the fateful voice of an avenging angel :

“John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave ;
His soul is marching on !”

One who looked upon the scene, thinks of it always,

when he reads of the last, great day—the boundless flame; the fervent heat; the shouts; the thousands, like the sands of the sea; all are not to be forgotten, until the likeness merges into the dread reality!”

True! Candid! Graphic! John Brown's spirit, if not his alleged “soul,” was marching on! It is still marching! Will it ever halt? Never! Not while there is within the boundaries of the United States a people who dare to laugh at sanctimonious fraud, heathenish Christianity, and the modest pretensions of the world's conscience-keepers! Or, not until, for the spirit of New England Puritanism, the above graphically described “likeness merges into the dread reality!”

Perhaps the picture given would be improved by the delicate shading of an official dispatch. We give a few touches from one sent by the gallant general, who commanded that gallant army, to the head of the government:

“We have consumed the corn and fodder in the region of country, thirty miles on either side of a line from Atlanta to Savannah, as also the sweet-potatoes, cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry; and have carried away more than ten thousand horses and mules, as well as a countless number of their slaves. I estimate the damage done to the state of Georgia, and its military resources, at one hundred millions of dollars. At least twenty millions of which has inured to our advantage, and the remainder is simple waste and destruction.”

One more touch—this time from a public speech delivered by the same gallant general, at a soldier's festival in the state of Ohio—and the picture will be a *chef-d'œuvre*, fit to adorn the mud palace of the “King of the Cannibal Islands.” Said General Sherman:

“They [the rebels] lost their slaves, their mules, their horses, their cotton, their all; and even their lives and personal liberty, thrown by them into the issue, were theirs only by our forbearance and clemency. So, soldiers, when we marched through and conquered the country of the rebels, we became owners of all they had; and I don’t want you to be troubled in your consciences for taking, while on our great march, the property of the conquered rebels. They forfeited their rights to it, and I, being agent for the government to which I belonged, gave you authority to keep all the quartermasters couldn’t take possession of, or didn’t want.”

How kindly considerate was the gallant general of the tender consciences of his gentle bummers! He knew they had hundreds of pianos, carpets, etc.; tons of solid silver-ware; silks, satins and laces, watches, jewelry and jewels, without end; but they had committed no wrong in getting possession of this property, and the only fault they could now commit would be to return the goods to their so-called owners. We can fancy him saying:

“Go and join the church, gallant bumper! What if you did knock down tottering age and capture gold watches and gold-rimmed spectacles! What if your parlor furniture, table ware and wife’s finery, was once claimed by rebels! What if, in your merry moods, you did seize helpless women by the hair, and tear gold and jewels from their bleeding ears! Were not these things thrown into the wager of war, and did you not march down to the sea, and in marching, conquer! Go join the church, and when you come to make your last grand march down to the sea of eternity, if Saint Peter will not respect your countersign, refer him to ME!”

We could saunter along through the “reconstruction

period," and get additional fine touches, but the picture is sufficiently vivid. Let us turn its face to the wall and pray that the civilization of the nineteenth century may never look upon its like again !

NOTE.—The extract of military exploits given in this chapter is from "Bricks Without Straw"—pages 90–100.



A Future Politician.

CHAPTER XXII.

PRISON LIFE AND AMUSEMENTS.

*"I loved fair Hope, and she is fled ;
There lies her grave ;—I would I too were dead."*

—EDWARD S. GREGORY.

*"Like one within a charnel,
I hear but dirges ringing for the dead—
Walk all the time with hand in hand of Death."*

—MRS. E. OAKES SMITH.

AT the time that the merry bummers were playing their amusing little jokes upon Colonel Desmit, whose mind at the moment, despite his sore trials, reverted, no doubt, to what General Neal Dow had spoken, and the *New York Times*, of January 6th, had also said of those of them who were new recruits, that they were "wretched vagabonds, of depraved morals, decrepit in body, without courage, self-respect or conscience—dirty, disorderly, thievish and incapable," Mr. Stewart, in his prison home at Johnson's Island, was reading a letter from General Conrad, which Dick had brought that morning with the usual forty dollars for the young master's use in purchasing necessary food and comforts for the ensuing month. This amount Dick solemnly declared, as usual, was but little more than half his earnings, as "Chief Clerk to the Sutler of General Conrad's Brigade."

Ah, those precious dollars! They represented twenty pounds of tea, fifty pounds of sugar, and one hundred and fifty pounds of good bread or crackers, for those of three

thousand emaciated prisoners, whose stomachs could not, without aid, take the scant three-fourths ration of salt pork or fish, and musty corn-meal or "hard tack," with a semi-quarterly onion or potato to mitigate the scurvy.

The letter filled the young man with the deepest gloom. It foretold the downfall of the cause which was dearer to him than life, and made him feel that he had rather spend his days within his present prison bounds, surrounded by all his present miseries, than to walk forth a free man and be forced to behold the heart-crushed agony of his people, and the impertinent insolence of those craven spirits which he well knew would now rush to the South, or send proxies, and which had forced secession that they might work their will upon his unhappy land.

In the deep grief of his soul, he hardly noticed the fact that General Conrad spoke of Miss Seymour as having come into possession of a handsome fortune, and gave the information that she had not replied to one of his letters, nor had he seen her or heard directly from her, since the battle of Gettysburg.

During the first year of his imprisonment, the young man had, month after month, expected to hear from her, even if she should not visit him. And he had looked and hoped in vain, till he finally came to the conclusion, as there could be nothing to prevent her writing to him if disposed to do so, that, in his last interview with Dr. Hansel, the old man had spoken more truth than he gave him credit for at the time.

He was convinced of this one day, when he accidentally overheard a subordinate officer joking Colonel Stoughton, the commandant of the prison.

"Colonel," said the young man, "I see from the papers that Florence Seymour has been left a large fortune by a

relative of hers. As she got so badly ‘mashed’ on you at the church festival we attended in Boston, perhaps, now that she has plenty of ‘tin,’ you will not mind playing ‘mashed’ yourself.”

“Well, no,” replied the officer. “I was attentive to her chiefly to please that old fossil relative of mine, her step-father, and had no idea of making a conquest—she is too slow. Yet, if she has over a hundred thousand, I’ll take her. But I’m determined never to sell out for less than a cool ‘C’ in the thousands.”

When Mr. Stewart heard this ungallant reply, he felt like springing through the window and seizing the stalwart dandy by the throat; but long months had passed since then, and now that he knew the life of the Confederacy was drawing rapidly to a close, the very gall of bitterness welled up in his soul; and, as his thoughts reverted to the past, he clinched his hands, and with the lines of a death agony on his features, he vowed in his heart that he hated Florence Seymour and everything that had a drop of Puritan blood in its veins; and more than that, he hated Frank Conrad, the pretended friend, who had officiously rescued him from death; for while he had no Puritan blood in his veins, he was worse—with the instincts and spirit of a Cavalier, he was a Puritan tool!

Alas! what bitter feelings may not a combined sense of wrong, and injustice, and abject grief over the corpse of dead hope, cause in the most noble and generous of bosoms! But the young man was enough of a philosopher to recover from this weak yielding to the flood of agonized feeling, which, for the time, swept all before it. He recognized the fact that the future had to be met, that there were duties yet to be performed, that though conquered and crushed his people yet lived; and thousands upon untold thou-

sands of them were women and children, with no living natural protector. Should he, who had aspired to feel in its full force, and to square his actions by the noble maxim of the noble Lee, that “‘duty’ is the sublimest word in the language,” now show the craven spirit of a skulker, and pine away with grief like a poor, deserted love-sick maiden? No; never! He would discharge his duty! But what was his duty? What was going to be the new condition of affairs in the country? He had lost faith in that high civilization which he once assured Miss Seymour her people were possessed of. True, he knew, as well as when the assurance was made, that the high degree of civilization was there in the breasts of many, but in most of them, it was, for the time, crushed under the heel of power, and in those in power it was held in abeyance, or subordinated to the mania with which Puritan fanaticism had succeeded in inoculating all but a very few. How long before mad passion would suffer the “still small voice” of that civilization to be heard in its full force? Ah! how many weary, dreary years? The young man felt that long years must intervene first, but, even in his deepest despondency, he did not believe that after two decades—after two-thirds of a generation had passed—the question would still remain unanswered.

As he could, for the present, do nothing but nurse his grief and indulge in speculations, he sought his scrap-book, that he might compare, from it, the feelings and sentiments of the two peoples, and be enabled to draw a conjectural horoscope of the future, when the proud and independent, but conservative, spirit of the South should be subjected to the unrestrained domination of Puritan fanaticism. He was at a loss to imagine to what length the latter might be prompted to go, and how far the

former could probably yield before being driven to cast away hope, and surrender to the mad dictate of desperation. Feeling under his shuck mattress, which, with the white blankets and sheets, had cost him more than would have sufficed, in times of peace and in his own land, to purchase a bed of eider-down, he drew forth his prison-manufactured scrap-book, and divesting himself, as far as possible, of his settled convictions, and making himself an unbiased judge and critic, he found his hopes and spirits rise and fall, like a thermometer being alternately subjected to the mild May atmosphere of his beautiful land, and the December blizzards of the cold North, as he read first from a Southern writer, and then from one of the North.

Among the first of the former, he read a letter which had been written by Captain Flournoy to the *Barrensville Herald*, in which the following sentence occurred with reference to the battle of Chancellorsville :

“Among the Federal dead we found poor Kellogg, who used to be a book-keeper for Messrs. ——— & ———, of Huntsville. I had believed he would remain neutral in this struggle despite his New England birth, for I did not think a fellow, apparently so amiable and sensible, could live eight months in the South without losing the prejudice, which is taught in the Sabbath, as well as the day schools of that section,* and becoming our friend.

* In the year 1868, a government officer, stationed at Minden, Louisiana, a man of more than ordinary intelligence, told the writer that, before he had mingled with Southern people, he was one of their most violent haters ever produced in his state—Connecticut. Being naturally of a nervous-sanguine temperament, he was often excited, in childhood, by seeing, at the doors of stores and family groceries, such signs as “no sugar sold here that is stained by the blood of the slave!” etc. He said that often the little talks of his Sabbath-school

Perhaps he did feel the friendship which he professed, and was prompted only by what he considered his duty to his mother-land. Many Yankees really believe the permanent cutting off of the South will ruin their section. Many of our people believe the same thing, and it may be that Kellogg imbibed that idea. If so, no honest man in the South, will censure him for his hostility to our purposes. We are striving for the best interests of our people; he certainly had a right, if it was not his duty, to do the same for his; and his personal friends at Huntsville and Barrensville may consistently drop a tear to his memory. We buried him decently, and his former friends in my company fired a salute over his grave."

As the young man read this letter, his thermopsychometer rose to "sixty degrees in the shade," and he turned to a letter written to the *Cincinnati Commercial*, by a staff correspondent, who had been a friend of the talented and gallant Confederate General Zollicoffer, giving an account of his death. He read :

"The corpse lay by the side of the road along which we passed, and all had a fair view of what was once Zollicoffer. I saw the lifeless body as it lay in a fence-corner by the side of the road, but Zollicoffer himself is now in hell. Hell is a fitting abode for all such arch-traitors. May all the other chief conspirators in this rebellion soon share Zollicoffer's fate—shot dead through the instrumentality of an avenging God,* their spirits sent straight-teacher—a beautiful amiable lady—would so excite him, that on his way home, he would, in a tearful phrenzy of indignation, take out his little pocket-knife, and wish that he could meet a slave-holder, that he might kill him and cut out his heart, and commit other barbarities upon his despised person.

* The divine instrumentality was evinced thus: Zollicoffer mistook a Federal regiment for one of his own, and riding up to it, gave an

way to hell, and their lifeless bodies lie in a fence-corner, their faces spattered with mud, and their garments divided up ; and even the hair of their head cut off and pulled out, by an unsympathizing soldiery of a conquering army, battling for the right.”

Ah ! this letter caused the mercury to fall to the freezing point ; and the young man quickly turned a leaf, and read an extract from an address by Bishop Meade, of Virginia, to his church :

“There is a strong and general desire, I believe, to retain as much as possible of our past happy intercourse, with those from whom we shall be more divided in other things. A meeting is already proposed for this purpose in one of the seceded states, whose plans, so far as developed, I will submit to the consideration of this body at its present session.

“I cannot conclude, without expressing the earnest desire that the ministers and members of our church, and all the citizens of our state, who are so deeply interested in the present contest, may conduct it in the most elevated and Christian spirit, rising above unworthy and uncharitable imputations on all who are opposed. Many there are, on both sides, equally sincere, as there ever have been in all the wars and controversies that have been waged upon earth ; though it does not follow that all have the same grounds of justice and truth on which to base their warfare.”

order. Instead of being made a prisoner, he was shot down, and killed. The complaisant piety of this literary savage reminds one of a stanza, in Whittier's description of the execution of a Salem witch, who “killed a cow, or witched a churn or dairy-pan :”

“They went up to their homes that day,
As men and Christians justified :
God willed it, and the wretch had died !”

This extract caused the mercury to rise again, this time to summer heat, and the young man turned to another ecclesiastical contribution—that of the Rev. Dr. Tyng, a celebrated New York divine, whose address had been condensed by the papers :

“He would not meet pirates upon the deck, and call it warfare. He would hang them as quick as he would shoot a mad dog. [Cheers.] There was but one road to peace, and that was absolute and entire subjection. [Cheers.] The sword of justice was the only pen that could write the final treaty. Referring to the troops, he asked : Who ever saw such an army as has been gathered in our land ? He would not except the ‘rare birds’ of Billy Wilson’s regiment. He might venture to say of them, that their salvation might be in the very consecration they have made of themselves to their country. [Cheers.] Thousands of Bibles had been given to the troops, who go to fight for their country. Did anybody believe there were five hundred copies in the army of renegades who are meeting them in the contest ? *It would scald and singe their polluted hands.* [Cheers.] We have every cause to be proud of our army. *They* are worthy of the Bible ; their names will glisten in glory ! [Cheers.]”

This extract caused the mercury to fall to zero, but the young man still continued to read from that side of his scrap-book. The next was a letter published in the New York *Herald*, from its correspondent with Sherman’s army :

“Any man who has seen the object that the name ‘bummer’ applies to will acknowledge that it was admirably selected. Fancy a man blackened by the smoke of many a pine-knot fire mounted on a scraggy mule, with a gun, a knapsack, a butcher knife, and a plug hat, making

his way through the pine forests, keen on the scent of bacon or silver spoons, or anything valuable, and you have him in your mind. Think how you would like him, if you were a lone woman, with a family of small children, far from help, when he blandly inquired where you keep your valuables. Think how you would smile when he pried open your chests with his bayonet, or knocked to pieces your tables, pianos and chairs, tore your bed-clothing in three-inch strips, and scattered them about the yard. Color is no protection from these rough-riders. They go through a negro cabin in search of diamonds and gold watches with just as much freedom and vivacity as they ‘loot’ the dwelling of a wealthy planter.* They appear to be possessed of a spirit of ‘pure cussedness.’ One incident of many will illustrate: A BUMMER stepped into a house and asked for sorghum. The lady gave him the jug, which he said was too heavy, so he merely filled his canteen. Then taking a huge wad of tobacco from his mouth, he thrust it into the jug. The lady inquired, in wonder, why he spoiled what he left her. ‘Oh, some feller ’ll come along and taste that sorghum, and think you’ve poisoned him; then he’ll burn your d—d old house.’ There are hundreds of these mounted men, and they go everywhere. Some of them are loaded down with silverware, gold coin, and other valuables. I hazard nothing in saying three-fifths, in value, of the property in the counties we have passed through were taken by Sherman’s army.”

* It was the case all over the South that silver and jewelry, when not buried, were, on the approach of a Federal force, given to the negroes, to be taken care of, as they were rarely robbed. Not one in ten thousand betrayed these trusts, but Sherman’s lambs seemed to have found out the trick.

Of the sack and destruction of Columbia, he read extracts taken from the Richmond papers :

“Sherman deliberately lied to Mayor Goodwyn. He counselled him to go and take needed rest, saying : ‘Not a finger’s breadth, Mr. Mayor, of your city shall be harmed. You may lie down and sleep, satisfied that your town shall be as safe in my hands as if wholly in your own.’ With this assurance, the mayor retired. In less than a quarter of an hour, three rockets were shot up from the capitol square. The mayor heard a soldier exclaim : ‘The town is to be fired ! That is the signal !’ And in a few minutes the city was on fire in over twenty distinct quarters. Engines and hose were brought out by the firemen, but these were driven from their labors by the fierce hostility of the soldiers ; the hose was hewn to pieces, and the firemen, fearing worse treatment for themselves, left the flames to do their work ; and what could they hope to accomplish against such a sea of fire. To a gentleman, who expressed his horror of such vandalism, a Federal soldier, laughingly, said : ‘Oh, this is nothing ! Wait till to-night and you ’ll see hell !’ And night brought hell if ever there was hell upon earth. But the sacking and looting began long before night. As the rockets were the signal for the fire, so the fire seemed to be the signal for the plundering and other villainy. Soon almost every house in town was visited by parties of from two to six. The first intimation of their presence would often be a pistol clapped to the head or breast of the owner, whether male or female.

“‘Your watch ! Your money !’ was the demand. Frequently no demand would be made. Rarely, indeed, was a word spoken if watch, chain, ring or bracelet presented itself to the eye. It was incontinently plucked

away. The slightest show of resistance provoked violence to the person.

“The venerable Mr. Alfred Huger was robbed in the chamber of his almost dying wife. He offered resistance, and was collared and robbed by violence.”

* * * * *

“The venerable Mr. H—— stood with his *couteau de chasse*, made bare in his bosom, guarding the persons of his daughters.

“Mr. O—— * * * * * bade the man stand off at the peril of his life ; saying that, while he submitted to be robbed of property, he would sacrifice life, without stint, before his child’s honor should be sacrificed. Mr. James G. Gibbes, with difficulty, pistol in hand, and then only with the assistance of a Yankee officer, rescued two young women from the clutches of as many ruffians.”

* * * * *

“Mrs. A. J—— was but recently confined. Her condition was very helpless. The men were apprised of all the facts in the case. They burst into the chamber, took the rings from the lady’s fingers, plucked the watch from under her pillow, and so overwhelmed her with terror that she sunk under the treatment and survived but a day or two.”

* * * * *

“In several cases newly-made graves were opened, the coffins taken out, broken open in search of buried treasure, and the corpses left exposed. Every spot in graveyard or garden, which seemed to have been recently disturbed, was sounded with sword or bayonet or ramrod in the desperate search after spoil.”

* * * * *

“A lady spoke indignantly to General Atkins, of Sherman’s army, and said: ‘Sherman wars upon women!’”

“‘Yes,’ replied General Atkins, ‘and justly. It is the women of the South who keep up this cursed rebellion. It gave us the greatest satisfaction to see those proud Georgia women begging crumbs from Yankee leavings; and this will soon be the fate of all you Carolina women.’”

* * * * *

“An officer, helping some ladies out of their burning home, was addressed by one of them :

“‘How as men and Christians you can behold the horrors of this scene, and the suffering of innocent people, without terrible pangs of self-condemnation and self-loathing, it is difficult to conceive.’

“‘We glory in it,’ was the answer. ‘I tell you, madam, that when the people of the North shall hear of the vengeance we have meted out to your city, there will be one universal shout of rejoicing from every man, woman and child from Maine to Maryland.’” *

* * * * *

“One who had been impudent, said to a mother who was bearing a child in her arms.

“‘Let me carry your baby, madam.’

“‘Do not touch him for your life!’ was the reply. ‘I would sooner hurl him into the flames and jump in after him than that he should be polluted by your touch!’

“‘Well, that’s going it strong, by G—d; but I like your pluck. You’ll see us coming back here after the war to get Carolina wives. We hate your men like hell, but we love your women.’

* This Puritan seemed to know that the fiendish joy at such fiend’s work would be confined chiefly to New England; but he slandered even those people, we believe.

“ ‘We prefer your hate, even though it come in the form of incendiarism and pillage,’ replied the lady.”

* * * * *

“We have quite an amusing story of a luckless wife, who was confronted by a stalwart soldier, with a horrid oath and a cocked revolver at her head.

“ ‘Your watch—your money, you d—d rebel!’

“The horrid oaths, the sudden demand, fierce looks and rapid action, so terrified the lady that she cried out, ‘Oh, my G—d! I have no watch, no money, nothing but what’s tied around my waist!’

“We need not say how deftly the bowie-knife was applied to loosen the stays of that lady.”

* * * * *

“Why should General Sherman have practiced a deception upon Mayor Goodwyn? The answer is very obvious. He saw when the honorable gentleman demanded ‘the treatment accorded by the usages of civilized warfare’ that it really was a *demand*, and not a timid supplication. He saw, too, that the mayor was a man of nerve and determination, and that there was a gleam of cynical recklessness in his eyes. True, he could have ordered him to be seized and taken away by the guards, but why risk a personal encounter when the expenditure of a little breath—the shaping of one inspiration of his lungs into words—would make all fair, and would save himself, if from nothing worse, from the charge of having ordered the assassination of the ‘impudent, reckless fellow!’”

* * * * *

Long before the young man finished his reading the mercury had dropped below zero, had passed the “blizzard” point, and lay congealed, a half globe of silver ice

in the bottom of the bulb. With a nervous shudder convulsing his frame, he threw the book from him, and, kneeling upon his shuck mattress, looked out upon the "campus," where he could see hundreds of weak, sickly, emaciated men—officers, the cultured and refined children of wealth and luxury, the flower of as gallant an army as ever struggled to beat back the fierce hordes of barbarism—some basking their shrunken forms in the sun against a shed, some carding out their matted locks with the "brigade comb," some, with tin cup in hand, performing necessary ablutions, with dirty rags for bathing towels, some searching their garments for vermin, some reading greasy Bibles or the advertisements in old papers, some stealthily and tearfully reading for the ten-thousandth time messages of love from worn and tattered letters that had been kept for years, some with saliva running from their mouths, betokening incipient idiocy, laughing and gibbering with imaginary companions, some gazing abstractedly upward at the passing clouds, some with sticks, stooping low and industriously marking upon the ground, as if in earnest effort to solve the problem of the future. Ah! it was too much! With hot tears in his eyes, and the silver ice freezing the core of his heart, he sank upon his bed, and in agony, exclaimed, with a more renowned patriot:

"Oh God! Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?"

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LULL IN THE STORM.

"Get thee glass eyes

And, like a scurvy politician, seem

To see the things thou dost not."—SHAKESPEARE'S KING LEAR.

"Cold stars above, around, a cheerless world."

—E. S. GREGORY'S WATCH-FIRE.

"PEACE reigns," said the Puritan press. "Victory has perched upon our banner and folded her wings; and the white dove of peace, blessed peace, broods over all the land!"

Peace is it—peace *pro aris et focis*? Ah! let us wait and see! Is not the fell spirit which has given us no peace for more than a generation now in power? Has that spirit the magnanimity to show more consideration for a helpless foe, than it ever showed for a strong and unoffending brother? Has not that spirit yet to revel, for the first time, in the sweets of unrestricted power? Has it not a "sacred mission" to "punish rebellion" and "make treason odious"? Have not the knaves errant yet to do their Fools' Errands; and the "Bricks" with and "Without Straw," which shall be thrown off from the surplus population of New England, yet to hold carnivals of rapine and villainy in the prostrate, suffering South? Have not the ruined people of that fair land, on which Heaven only now dares to smile, yet to struggle for the preservation of their civilization, against the plots and

machinations of New England Puritanism and African ignorance, that unnatural partnership of the wolf and the lamb, that incongruous mixture of nitro-muriatic acid and the "gentle dew"? Has not the time yet to come when a bishop of the most powerful Church in New England is to publish to his Church, and to the world, the solemn conviction, that the only proper "civilizing agents" to be used upon the white people of the South are cannon-balls, fire-brands and arsenic? * And have not these would-be "civilizers" yet to have their hearts fired by the modest intimation that these agents, elements and suitable emblems of their civilization, will be declined with thanks; and that the colliers of New Castle are not begging the freezing paupers of Kamtschatka for their driftwood fuel?

Peace? ah! Let us say nothing about peace at present. The brave men who helped, with *arms* in their hands, to overpower the South, have offered the olive branch, and it has been accepted. There is peace between these; but the warfare of the cowards and skulkers upon their helpless foes is just begun!

Some months have elapsed since we left Mr. Stewart in prison, with his bosom being torn by the death-agony of an expiring hope. We find him to-day, a rather shabbily-dressed, and apparently aimless wanderer along Broadway, in the city of New York. He went there, as he believed, for the purpose of ascertaining the whereabouts of his friend, General Conrad. He had learnt from the papers that his friend's firm, Banks, Conrad & Co., had failed; and a knowledge of this had aroused his inner consciousness to the fact, that he did not hate Frank Conrad, but

* Bishop Gilbert Haven published that sentiment; and there is no reason to doubt that it was endorsed by his Church—the *Northern Methodist*—in Massachusetts.

on the contrary, that his sympathy for him was deep and sincere. As for Miss Florence Seymour, she had not failed ; quite the reverse, and his having heard in prison, on the day of his release, that Colonel Stoughton had gone to New York to visit her, had nothing, of course, to do with his own desire to express, *viva voce*, his sympathy for his friend in his financial troubles. But he had found that none of the firm of Banks, Conrad & Co. were in the city. They had closed their business there, and were in Boston, looking after some of the affairs of the house in that city.

The young man had heard nothing of Dr. Hansel or his step-daughter, and as Dick's dollars in his pockets were growing scarce, he had just determined to leave the next morning after having heard a favorite opera, which was advertised to be given that night by a celebrated troupe.

After tea he went around to the opera house and, having sent Dick to the gallery, was standing in the vestibule talking to a stranger, as the crowds passed in, when he was rudely and unnecessarily jostled by a gentleman in his rear whom, on turning around, he found to be no less a personage than Colonel Stoughton, the ogre of the prison from which he had been released. The officer was chatting merrily with a lady who was under the escort of another gentleman, and the young man, stepping aside and bowing low, exclaimed :

“ I beg the lady's pardon, Colonel Stoughton ! ”

“ Ha ! It is well, sir ! all right ! ” replied the officer, with a supercilious stare.

“ But understand me, sir ; only the lady's ! ” said the young man, growing pale around the lips.

“ Eh ? What do you mean by that, sir ? ” asked the officer, angrily, half turning his head.

"I will explain later," replied the young man, again bowing, "and shall await you here, sir."

The officer passed on without replying, but made a remark to the lady, which was drowned in the noise of the crowd, but at which he himself laughed quite boisterously. Mr. Stewart promenaded the vestibule until the curtain had gone down on the first scene of the opera and, as Colonel Stoughton had not then appeared, he went inside and glanced around the house. Chancing to notice a pair of opera-glasses leveled upon himself from a box, he glanced up just as the glasses fell to the stage below, causing the young lady, who had held them, to start up with a slight scream. The curtains of the box were instantly drawn together, by a gentleman whom the young man recognized to be Colonel Stoughton. Finding a vacant seat nearly opposite the box, he sat down to await the drawing apart of the curtains, for the brief glance which he had of the contour of the lady's head, satisfied him that she was not the one with whom the officer had entered the building, and excited his curiosity to know if it might not be Miss Seymour. As he took his seat, he heard a lady in front of him say to another :

"Yes, Colonel Stoughton was attentive to Fannie Allsop last winter, but I tell you I *know* ! It was thought in Boston that they were to be *married* in the spring, but Fannie has only *mental* and *personal* charms, and this Seymour girl has *the* charm, *par excellence*, which is irresistible to the masculine—shall I say '*fancy* ?' "

"And you *know* they are to be married ? "

"I have it from a confidential *friend* of *his*. They are to be married Thursday—day after to-morrow—morning, and will sail for Europe in the afternoon of that day. I am *surprised* at her to be here to-night."

"Who is she, any way? I know most of the Seymours, but never heard of a Florence."

"Oh; she is one of the *poor* cousins; or *was* until somebody left her a good part of his fortune—one of her great uncles, I believe."

The young man listened to this conversation, until it was stopped by the ringing up of the curtain, and still the curtains to the box were not drawn back. Finally, while the audience were breathlessly listening to a thrilling strain of melody, he arose and left his seat, with the remark, muttered to himself:

"What a trivial matter—the dropping of a pair of opera-glasses—to create so great a commotion! I had no idea Miss Seymour was so nervous."

A few minutes later he entered the box unceremoniously, having no card to send in advance, and having no doubt that he should receive such welcome, at least, as common civility always accords, from Dr. Hansel, should he be present. But the old gentleman, who was sitting near the entrance to the box—perhaps he did not care to be seen in an opera-house—arose suddenly to his feet and demanded:

"What does this intrusion mean, sir?"

"I am Stewart of Alabama, doctor," replied the young man, supposing that he was not recognized, "and desire to pay my respects to Miss Seymour, and to inquire after the health of yourself and family."

"We are all well, sir; but did you not insult my nephew, Colonel Stoughton, in the vestibule; and do you not know that he is in this box?"

"I believe him to be here, sir; but I assure you, my visit has no reference to him whatever."

"But I **must** ask you to retire, sir. The fact that you

know him to be here shows that you have not sufficient respect for Miss Seymour to prompt you to avoid the risk of a collision in her presence."

"Miss Seymour does not entertain a doubt of my most profound respect, sir; and there could not possibly be any risk, such as you intimate, where only gentlemen are concerned."

"Why do you bandy words, sir?" demanded Colonel Stoughton, angrily, moving his chair aside as if to advance. "You have been requested to retire; do you mean to wait to be ordered?"

"No, sir; I see that there is danger—Doctor Hansel knows you better than I do—so I shall await *your* orders in the vestibule."

As the young man closed the door behind him, he heard a chair fall over in the box, followed immediately by a shuffling of feet; and a policeman, who had doubtless been attracted by the loud words of Colonel Stoughton, confronted him with the inquiry:

"What's the matter in there?"

"Nothing of any consequence. All will be quiet now," replied the young man, passing on.

He had been promenading the vestibule for half an hour or more, pausing occasionally at one door or another to listen to some favorite strain, when an officer who came in from the street approached him and remarked:

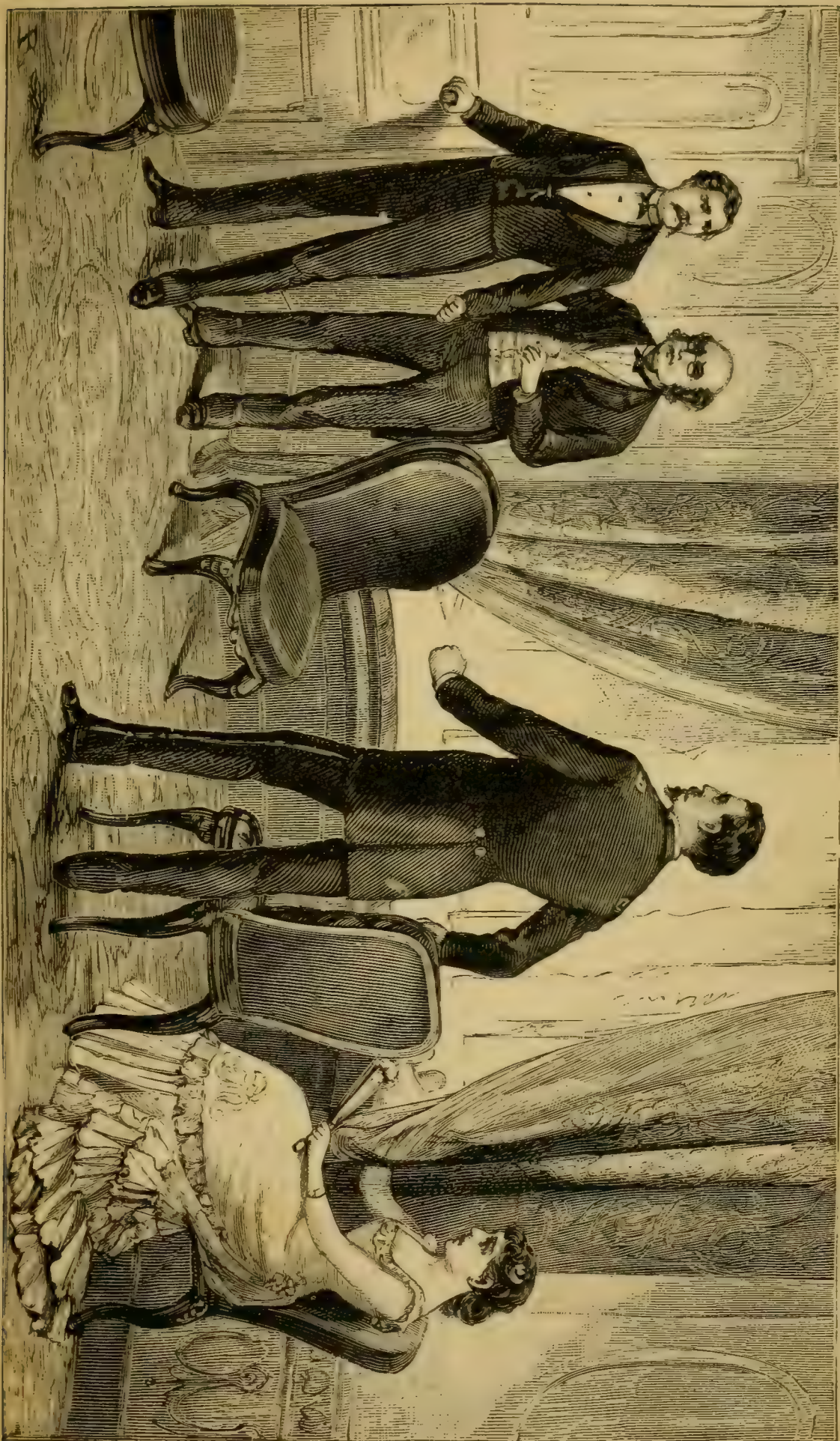
"You have been promenading here for some time, sir; why do you not go in?"

"I have an appointment to meet a party here," replied the young man, carelessly.

"Before the close of the performance? What for?"

"I do not care to tell, sir."

"Did the party promise to meet you here?"



"I shall await *your* orders in the vestibule!"



"No."

"Then how could it be an appointment?"

"I made it myself."

"Perhaps then you'll be disappointed?"

"Oh, no; he'll hardly creep out with the actors," said the young man, with a laugh.

"Then he is bound to creep out with the actors, or keep the appointment you have made for him, eh?"

"I see your drift, sir," said the young man, suddenly growing serious; "but you are mistaken. I am not that kind of person."

"Perhaps not; but I must take you in charge, nevertheless, sir!"

"In charge!" exclaimed the young man, in astonishment. "On what grounds?"

"Have you not threatened Colonel Stoughton? and are you not here waylaying him?"

"No; I asked him to meet me here, and intended to demand an apology from him; nothing more to-night, at least."

"We know all about it, sir; and I am sorry to have to trouble you to go with me."

"Then will you do me the kindness to notify a colored friend of mine who is now in the gallery? His name is Dick Stewart, and I fear he will be unable to find his way alone to our hotel."

Another policeman who was standing at some distance was sent for Dick, who soon made his appearance, talking earnestly to the officer, who had taken his arm.

"Mars' Chyarles," he said, as the young man took the other officer's arm and started down the steps, "I told you so! I knowed dey'd grab you ef dey got half a chance. Dey's took you up des cause you want to let some o' dese

slick-hat fellers know who's what, an' I has tole dis gent'man dat I knocked down two men, an' kicked de haslet most out'n another one las' fall at a co'n shuckin'—what dese folks calls a husky bee—an' he won't take me up. Dat's what I calls 'scriminatin' agin a gent'man."

"I should like to have your company in the lock-up, Dick," laughed the young man, "but I much prefer to have you go back to the hotel and put your wits to work to ascertain how many years it will take you to earn a thousand dollars to pay my ransom."

"How many years!" exclaimed Dick, looking at the officer, as if the remark was addressed to him; "you ain't gwine to stay in no prison no years! Leastways not by yourself. Dar's too many ole fat fellers wid big watch chains an' long munny pusses runnin' 'roun here loose for dat. It's a po' rule dat won't work—one way or 'tother."

"There's but one working of any rule that can work us any good now, Dick," replied the young man, with a laugh, "and that is, 'put money—honest money—in thy purse.' If you can hire at the hotel as chief bell-runner and bottle-washer, at ten dollars per week, it will only take you two or three years to raise the necessary funds."

This laughing remark seemed to put a new idea into Dick's head, and, after seeing where the young master was to be locked up, and when the hearing would be had, he left for the hotel, where "white niggers waits on cullerd gent'men," in a brisk walk.

As he hurried along he chanced to glance into a carriage whirling by a cross street in front of him, and recognized Dr. Hansel as the gentleman occupant.

"Dat's de idee!" he exclaimed, suddenly, striking the

fist of one hand into the open palm of the other, and starting off in a run to keep the carriage in sight, “Mars’ Chyarles don’t know *who’s* in dis big town! Ef he did, he’d snort an’ cavort ’roun’ wuss’n a caged lion in dat jail. But Mars’ Doctor’ll help me, I know. He ain’t no bad man—des ain’t been used to niggers, dat’s all—an’ I was mean es a dog to call ’im a ole rooster, an’ I never will do it no mo’, es long es I live.”

He was half out of breath before the chase was over, and he saw the carriage stop at the door of a handsome residence. The lady alighted first, and ran up the marble steps, and he rushed up, just as the old gentleman was coaxing the kinks out of his stiffened muscles on the curbstone, with the enthusiastic salutation:

“Howdy, Mars’ Doctor; howdy, sar! I’s glad to see you—deed I is! An’ bless gracious, Miss Flo’nce! Howdy, young mistis, howdy! How’s ole mistis?”

“Who are you, sir?” exclaimed the old man, drawing back and eyeing the poor fellow suspiciously.

“Why, Mars’ Doctor, don’t you know me? I’s Dick Styode, sar; Mars’ Chyarles Styode’s Dick, in Alabamer; an’ I has been to the ’Theneum many a time, an’ you has been to our house; you an’ all your fambly, an’ I has driv’ you in our kerrige, an’ we’s ole frens, an’ I’s in trouble! De young marster is got ketched agin, an’ if I don’t raise a *thousan’* dollars, or darabouts, he’ll be——”

“Unhand me, you ragamuffin!” exclaimed the old man, snatching his coat skirt from the grasp which the negro had taken on it, as he saw him about to turn away; “I desire to have nothing to do with you or your so-called master. Pass on, or I’ll call the police!”

“Mars’ Doctor,” pleaded the negro, “have pity! I don’t want you to gimme no money! I’s a stranger in

dis big town, an' all I wants is edvice! I axes your pard'n for lickin' dat nigger Dolfus, an' bein' sassy to dat ole 'oman wid curls all 'round, an' I has always been a 'spectful—Oh, Miss Flo'nce have pity! Is you gwine to desert a fren cause he's a po' nigger an' a long ways from home?"

The appeal was made to Miss Seymour, who still stood on the top of the steps, a silent but deeply interested spectator, as Dr. Hansel nodded to a policeman who came up at the moment.

"Send him on away from here!" ordered the old man, as he passed up the steps.

"Stop!" said Miss Seymour to the officer; "this man is making no disturbance. He is a stranger, and has sought us only that he may get advice. If no one else will befriend him, I shall do so myself."

"Miss Seymour," exclaimed the old man, seeing several persons pause on the opposite side of the street and gaze across curiously, "are you aware that you are making a public spectacle of yourself?"

"Then ask this man into the house!"

"Off with him to the station, officer!" cried the old man, imperiously.

"Stop!" exclaimed the young lady, running down the steps, with pale cheeks. "This man served and befriended us in the past, and I shall not desert him now. He has done no wrong, but he is in trouble and needs advice, he says. If he is taken to the station house, I shall call a hack and go there to hear what he wishes to say."

"Miss Seymour," said Dr. Hansel, in an angry hiss, going half way down the steps, "go in instantly! I command you! You are making a public scandal!"

"I am sorry, sir," said the young lady, firmly. "Will

you ask this man into the house or else send for a hack for me ? ”

“ Come in here, you black imp ! ” commanded the old man, angrily, forgetting the unlubricated kinks in his muscles, and running rapidly up the steps.

“ Miss Flo’nce,” said Dick, as he walked by the side of the young lady up the steps, “ I’s gwine to put your name in my pra’rs from dis day out. I knowed at fust dat you was a angel an’ wouldn’t desert a fren’, even ef he was a po’ common-lookin’ nigger ; an’ I’s most ’stracted wid trubble. I has bin in a heap o’ tight places in my time, but it was out in de country whar I could git a plenty o’ ar an’ elbow room ; but dis big town an’ all dese fokes ’stracts me ! ”

Dr. Hansel awaited them in the hall, and bowing with mock deference, he inquired :

“ Will my Lady Magnificent entertain her guest in the kitchen ? ”

“ We will go to the dining room, Dick,” said the young lady, affecting not to notice the old man’s rudeness, “ and have some coffee while I hear your trouble.”

While Dick narrated his troubles, and told of the precious contents of the parchment envelope sewed up in the breast of his jacket, he protested against being seated in the young lady’s presence, but finally yielded in a confused manner “ to please de young mistiss,” and seated himself so near the front edge of the chair, as to be in danger of slipping off. But when “ a fine gent’man wid ’a white weskit an’ a biled shirt ” entered, bringing coffee, sardines, chipped tongue and crackers, and refused, with only a slight gesture and shrug of the shoulder, to accept his pantomimic proposition to exchange places, his cup of embarrassments was filled to overflowing.

The young lady, however, relieved him by sending "James" off for a pawnbroker, and then going herself in quest of a pair of scissors, with which to open the breast-pocket of his buckskin jacket.

It was long past midnight before Dick left the house, with James as a guide to his hotel; and during the time spent within, he had exchanged his lugubrious countenance for one that sent a beam of joy from every square inch of its surface.

"I say, Jim!" he exclaimed to his guide, having lost his deference for the supposed fine gentleman as soon as he ascertained that he was only a "white nigger," "I's des spilin' to let de nabers hear from me; I feels so good. Would dem brass-button fellers dat's totin' dem rollin'-pins roun' here for sodes, grab me ef I was to whirl in an' larn de elements wid a rale ole Ferginny co'n-shuckin' whoop?"

"Don't do it!" exclaimed the other, seizing him by the arm, as he thought the whoop was about to leap out upon the decorous air of Fifth Avenue. "It would cost us five dollars apiece!"

"Well, I won't fling away no munny," replied Dick, making a motion as if to lock the whoop in his throat, "ef dat's de game! But I's got a dead load of it—I's lousy wid *munny*! Wouldn't dat be fun ef one o' dese bunco fellers was to come sailin' roun' an' smell de cyaron, an' lite on to Dick for a little lam' too dead to skin! Yah! yah! Come on, Jim, I's gwine to treat you to a whole dollar's wuff o' de bes' in de lan'!"

The next morning, when Mr. Stewart was brought up, it was charged that he had threatened the life of a gentleman, in his own private box, at the —— opera house, and was arrested while in the act of waylaying him in the ves-

tibule of the building. The young man denied the charges; but, in reply to questions propounded by the police justice, admitted that he had waited to demand an apology, and, in case it had been refused, it was his intention to administer merited chastisement in some proper manner, and at some proper time and place. Having elicited this admission, the magistrate decided that he must give bonds, in the penalty of one thousand dollars, to keep the peace for the space of one year.

“But, your honor,” protested the young man, “I know no one in the city whom I could ask to go upon my bond; and, beside, the other party will sail for Europe to-morrow.”

“You can deposit the amount in bank, sir, as your security, and I will allow you to withdraw it as soon as it shall be ascertained that the other gentleman has gone to Europe to be absent for any length of time.”

“I am a paroled prisoner, your honor, and have not so much as one-tenth of the amount named.”

“Can you not arrange it by telegraph?”

“No, sir; I doubt if I have a friend in the South who can raise one thousand dollars in money.”

“I am very sorry, sir; but if you cannot arrange it in some way, I shall have to keep you in confinement—at least until to-morrow after the other gentleman shall have sailed, should he do so.”

Dick, who had lost the way between his hotel and the court-room, and had been greatly delayed thereby, had come in a few moments before the last remark, and had paused near the entrance to ascertain the position of affairs. He now sidled up to the young master, and in an excited whisper, which was heard by half the house, said:

“I’s got de munny, Mars’ Chyarles! Pay up, an’ less git! Miss Flo’nce helped me!”

"What money?" asked the young man, in astonishment.

"Dem thousan' dollars! Mum's de word!"

"What thousand dollars?"

"To git you out! Marmsell's big dimunt! Mum!"

"What is it?" asked the magistrate, having closely observed the by-play.

"A friend proposes to furnish the necessary money for my surety, your honor," replied Mr. Stewart, with the perplexity he felt plainly visible in his countenance.

"This colored man?" asked the magistrate, eyeing Dick over the steel rim of his glasses. "Is he the one who pledged himself last night to raise a large amount of money or else to get into prison?"

"That was only a jest of his, your honor. He is a thoroughly respectable man."

"Let me see the money?" said the magistrate, addressing Dick. "You don't look like a Wall Street broker, but appearances are deceptive sometimes. How much is there?"

"A even thousan', boss," replied Dick, handing up a large buff envelope pretty well filled with bills, "an' it's all hones' munny."

"Yes? Where did you get it?" asked the magistrate, running over the bills hurriedly.

Dick stated, in his peculiar style of narrative, the fact that in 1861 Marienne had enclosed a large diamond in an envelope made of the 'coon-skin head of his banjo, and fearing that the young master would not accept the offering, had directed him, if an emergency ever arose, for which there was no other solution, to deliver the ring to the young man, or else to sell it for his benefit; closing with an account of his visit to Dr. Hansel and the pawning of the ring for the money in hand.

“Who is Dr. Hansel?” asked the magistrate.

“He is de ole roos—de gent’man dat we used to know in Alabama.”

“Where does he reside?”

“At de corner whar dar’s white rock steps to de do’.” replied Dick, unable to give any idea of the locality.

“What street and number, sir?”

“Dunno, boss!” exclaimed Dick, startled by the officer’s stern voice. “Dar’s a silver bress-plate on de do’, an’ a brass ’oman by de stars-steps holdin’ up a lamp.”

“Who was the pawnbroker, sir? What was his street and number, and all about him?”

“Dunno, boss!” replied Dick, quite bewildered.

“Have you anything to show? Where’s the envelope the ring was in?”

“I’s got it, sar,” replied Dick, reluctantly.

“Hand it up.”

“’Twant ’spected for nobody to see dat but——” began the confused negro, but was cut short by the peremptory command, “Hand it up, sir!” and receiving an approving nod from the young master, he handed a misshapen parchment envelope from which the address had almost entirely disappeared in consequence of the frequent wettings it had received in the hundreds of rains that its faithful custodian had marched, bivouacked and camped in during the past four years.

As the magistrate opened it and drew out the coffee-colored paper, through which the diamond had worn on each side, a ring fell into his hand, and Mr. Stewart instantly recognized Miss Seymour’s handsome and chaste lapis-lazuli.

“Ha! here is your diamond,” exclaimed the magistrate, holding the ring up in the light; “made of glass and

painted blue ! Quite an accommodating pawnbroker to lend a thousand dollars on a blue-glass diamond, and then return it before he got his money back !”

“Dat is Miss Flon’ce’s ring, sar,” exclaimed Dick, looking as if he felt that circumstantial evidence was about to consign him to a felon’s cell. “De tother ring, Miss Flon’ce told de man dat fetched de money, she would ’deem it dis mornin’. I dunno how dat *ring* come in dar, but Miss Flon’ce told me dar was a *message* in dar for Mars’ Chyarles.”

“Who are Miss Florence and ‘Mars’ Chyarles’ ?”

“I think I can explain it, if you will permit me, your honor,” said Mr. Stewart, coming to the rescue of Dick, who was badly demoralized by the magistrate’s evident suspicion. “The diamond was pawned ; and the lady, Miss Florence, an old friend of mine, substituted her ring for the diamond.”

“Read this paper, sir, written four years ago, and see how it fits your explanation,” said the magistrate, handing the creased and dilapidated sheet down to the young man.

The paper proved to have preserved the writing much better than the home-made parchment envelope had done, and Mr. Stewart read, without much difficulty, the blurred characters in Marienne’s handwriting :

“THE OAKS, June 6th, ’61.

“*Dear Monsieur :*

“I have cause to believe that the light of this gem has cast a spell of evil which has resulted, indirectly, in unhappiness to you ; and it has become hateful to me. If its incarceration shall not break the spell, perhaps its possession may enable you to make its transferable value serve you in time of dire necessity. Use it as you will. It is yours, and shall be mine never more ! Mammy endorses this resolution and advises this action. May the God of battles preserve and keep you from all harm !

“Yours faithfully,

“MARIENNE.”

Below this he read, in fresh plain characters and Miss Seymour's round, beautiful hand :

“The incarceration is ended ; the malignant spell is broken ; good has come out of evil.

“There is a new incarceration ; will it work a beneficent spell ; can it resurrect the hopes of the past ?”

The young man's face was very pale, and there was a suspicion of moisture upon his eyelashes, as he addressed the court again :

“I think my explanation fits exactly, your honor. The recent writing plainly intimates the substitution of the ring you hold for the one which was originally enclosed.”

“Yes,” replied the magistrate, kindly, “it can be construed in that way ; but a thousand dollars is too much money to raise on a ring from a New York pawnbroker, it seems to me ; and I shall have to require proof. If we could ascertain the number and street of any of the parties, we could have one or more of them here within half an hour. Can't you conduct an officer to the place, sir ?” he asked of Dick.

“Yes, boss ! I kin try !” he responded, excitedly. “My luck has helped me out o' many a *hard* place, an' ef it'll stick to me a little longer, I'll thank my stars ; an' git back to whar you don't have to 'pend on luck all de time.”

But the poor fellow had no occasion this time to thank his stars, for instead of leading in the direction of Fifth Avenue he conducted the officer to the vicinity of the old Five Points, and the search was soon abandoned. On his return he found that the officers of the law were not the “'scriminatin' ” persons he had thought them on the night previous, and they very impartially locked him up with

the young master, giving both the assurance that they should be released as soon as the police could find the pawnbroker, or any other one of the persons having a knowledge of the facts, to verify the statement made.

Three days had elapsed after Dick's incarceration, before the pawnbroker was found by the police. His statement and identification of a part of the money cleared all doubts from the minds of the officers and magistrate; and it having been already ascertained that Colonel Stoughton had sailed to Europe, in company with Dr. Hansel and family, the two prisoners were released at the same time, and the money and the ring were returned to Dick's custody.

"Mars' Chyarles," said the latter, after having carefully counted the money at the hotel, "does you 'member dat sarmunt Passen Ellit preached, de las' time me an' you hyeard him, 'bout Sodom an' Gomorrer? Well, I was beginin' to think dat dis is de place, done growed up agin; but I blieve dese is right honest sort o' fokes—de money is all right—dey hasn't took a cent! But for all dat, I don't blieve dese long-tail, brass-button fellers, dat totes roun' dem biscuit-beaters so gran', does a thing in de world but spy roun', watchin' an' prayin' for a chance to grab some feller an' make his heart swink up, till it's es little an' es heavy es a grape-shot. An' ef you winks one eye oftener'n tother, dey wants to know what you done dat for; an' I moves dat we pitches out, right away, for de 'Alabamer lowlans,' whar fokes ain't got so much curiosity."

The young man endorsed Dick's conclusion, whatever he may have thought of his premises, and, as it was now late in the forenoon, he went out to procure a ticket for Dick, as the Government had furnished him transportation

for himself only. As he walked quickly along, revolving in his mind a compromise between duty and inclination, and ignoring the fact that Necessity sat as the stern and inexorable arbiter, he ran full against a gentleman, who closed his arms around him, with the exclamation :

"Stewart, my dear fellow, of all the people on the earth whom I most desired and least expected to see, you are the one !"

"Conrad, old boy," replied the young man, returning his friend's embrace, "I had despaired of finding you ! I came here for that purpose, as I could not learn where you were. Do you know that your cousin sailed for Liverpool two days ago ?"

"Yes ; but I am glad to see that she left her ring," replied the young man, with a twinkle in his eyes, as he glanced significantly at that ornament upon Mr. Stewart's fourth finger. "Come in here to Delmonico's, and let's talk."

As the two friends sat over their elegant *patisserie* and fabulously old wine, General Conrad informed his friend, whose secret he had been intrusted with after his capture, that Miss Seymour had inherited a handsome fortune, and that he had heard it was Dr. Hansel's determination to marry her to a nephew of his—a Colonel Stoughton—"a 'rear'-colonel, as we call those who did not have a fancy for the front."

"Madam Rumor has it," he added, "that she is to marry this rear-colonel, as soon as they arrive in London, which is their place of destination, I hear ; but I do not believe it ; nor do you, eh ?"

"No, I do not ! Have you conversed with her recently ?"

"No ! Do you know that I have not seen, or had a

line from her, since Gettysburg? Before that, I used to hear from her every month or so, as she was being hauled about 'from post to pillar,' after their return from Alabama. Did you hear from her often?"

"Never a word! I wrote to the address you gave me several times, but received no replies."

"I mentioned in each one of the few letters I wrote her that you were at Johnson's Island. Did she mention the fact to you?"

"I have not spoken with her, my dear fellow. This ring came into my possession in quite a romantic way."

The young man then narrated to his friend the occurrences of the past several days.

"I am sorry you did not get an opportunity to pinch the rear-colonel's ears," laughed Mr. Conrad—he had resigned his office. "As to the Rev. Hezekiah Hansel, I have little or no confidence in him. It may be that he has condescended to play little tricks. You will laugh at the idea, perhaps, but I make it a rule to watch every New Englander who has a Bible name; particularly if he puts on a sanctimonious face."

"As regards Dr. Hansel, I fear that your suspicions are well founded," said the young man, sadly. "I have reason to believe that he has not dealt with me candidly, by any means. May it not be possible that he will play some trick, practice some deception upon that dear girl, which will affect seriously all her future life? Heavens! I tell you what I shall do! I have a thousand dollars; you shall lend me as much more, and I shall follow on the next steamer!"

"With the greatest pleasure, my friend! I have no doubt I can raise the money. You know my firm failed not long since—too much Bible name and Plymouth

Rock grit in the head of the firm—but there are assets from which I shall realize ten thousand dollars, or more; and that will be, when I get it, my fortune, since ‘this cruel war is over.’ But I can raise you, in a day or two, all that you want. As to that little cousin, she has as strong a will as Dr. Hansel, and he can influence her only through her mother, poor woman. He can never make her marry Colonel Stoughton, unless she takes a fancy to do so; for, though she is as gentle as a lamb, she can be as firm, if not as ‘cold as the rocks on Torneo’s hoary brow.’ When will you go?”

“Ah! your mention of business,” replied the young man, sadly, “reminds me that my firm failed some time ago. ‘Stewart, King Cotton & Co,’ were ruined by ‘Turchin, Uncle Sam & Co.’ No, my good friend, I will not borrow money. It might be that I could not repay it. I have nothing left but two sections of land, without a building, and without a fence—a wilderness of weeds and briars. Duty points my way homeward. I must learn what has become of Marienne, and if mammy and my poor people are not suffering for bread. My food almost chokes me, since I have myself ceased to suffer from hunger, when I think of that poor old woman as a sufferer who has, perhaps, not had enough to eat at two consecutive meals for three years. I shall have to sell one section of my land for about one-fourth its value, in order to be enabled to make bread on the other. Ah! what a terrible thing is poverty!”

“Cheer up, old fellow!” exclaimed Mr. Conrad, slapping his friend heartily on the back. “‘Enough is as good as a feast.’ See how I bear up under like troubles! True I have none dependent on me, but I fancy I am poorer than you, and I have an idea of becoming a cotton planter, to

recuperate my health, in the South. What will you take for your two sections?"

"Your ten thousand dollars," laughed the young man.

"Agreed. Shake hands!" and the two friends laughingly shook hands.

"It is a trade, but I shall not cheat you," said Mr. Conrad. "What is your property worth?"

"Before the war, it cost over forty thousand dollars, but it would sell now for less than ten thousand. I can only sell one section, however—for I must take care of my people—and I shall be very fortunate if I get five thousand for it."

"I'll take it and give you more; thus: I know I shall realize over ten thousand out of my wreck, and I'll give all I get for a half interest in your land. We will be equal partners in everything, and will use the money to build houses and fences, buy mules and implements and hire labor. Side by side, and shoulder to shoulder, we will commence and fight a determined campaign against Poverty, Want & Co. What do you say?"

"Agreed. Shake hands again!" exclaimed the young man, springing to his feet. "We will hunt up Dick, and start for Alabama to-night!"

"No," said Mr. Conrad, "you can go as soon as you see fit, and I shall send you a check, next week, for a few thousand dollars; but I cannot join you for a month or more. In the meantime, you can be getting things in trim."

The two friends sought Dick, imparted their tidings, laughed at his "camp-meeting capers," and parted to meet next in Alabama.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOME AGAIN !

*" Oh ! who can tell the unspeakable misery
Of solitude like this ? "—SOUTHEY'S THALABA.*

*Alas, for my weary and care-haunted bosom !
The spells of the spring-time arouse it no more ;
The song in the wild-wood, the sheen in the blossom,
The fresh-swelling fountain—their magic is o'er ! "*
—WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK.

" **THE OAKS !** " exclaimed Mr. Stewart as, a week after having wept over the graves of his father and mother—the former killed by violence, the latter by grief—he spurred a borrowed wind-broken cavalry horse along the east road leading to the site of his former home. " Ah ! the oaks are there, but " The Oaks " is numbered with the loved and lost ! Four years ago here dwelt peace and plenty—half a hundred happy hearts, in half a score of happy homes ! To-day we find—what ? The parched trees still standing, numerous little piles of brick and rubbish, each one representing a once comfortable home, three larger piles of brick and mortar, and one chimney, which has stubbornly refused to join its neighbors and lie down to sleep in abject ruin, but whose top the rude blasts of Boreas have torn away ! Ah ! it proudly holds its battered head up amid the withered branches of the lordly oaks ! Grim sentinel of the past, I salute you ! Stern defier of ruin, I bow before you ! Sad monument

of departed happiness, I give you a tear ! Where are all those who first saw you in your startling nakedness ? How many are left to mingle their tears with mine ? How many sleep the calm sleep that knows no morning of sorrow ? Ah, me !

“ ‘ Man is but a little boat
That paddles down the tide ;
Passengers are passing joys,
While Sorrow sits beside ! ’

“ Yes ; Sorrow sits ! The passengers have their brief dance and flit away ; but he sits out the voyage ! Stark old chimney ! Many a time have you warmed me and my friends, but now your desolate grandeur sends a greeting across the wasted fields that chills my heart ! But what is it that you are nursing at your feet ? A miserable little log hut ! Poverty and wretchedness, crouching at the feet of departed plenty ! Want and suffering, hugging the knees of dead comfort ! Abject need, supplicating aid from the cold corpse of opulence ! The first rude hut of new-born ‘ freedom ’ seeking to utilize the last grand chimney of defunct slavery ! Poetic justice toward which ? Poetic justice ! Let those whose children’s children will have to stand up before that dispassionate and relentless judge, the Future, and make excuses for vandalism that has disgraced the nineteenth century, call it so ! Let the present jibe and taunt ; we appeal from ‘ Philip drunk to Philip sober ! ’ Poor old mammy ! But, thank God, I can help them yet ! Hello ! ”

This shout was uttered within ten feet of the hut, which had been apostrophized in the above soliloquy, and in a moment the rude door was dragged, with difficulty, half open upon its creaking wooden hinges. Two little black, pinched faces peered out through the opening, and above

them a sober care-worn face, which is recognized as mammy's, surmounted by a crown of dingy, gray hair.

"'Evenin' boss," said the old woman in salute, turning her attention to the horse as she did not recognize the rider, "does you want to see Gyawge? He's ailin' wid de rheumatis', an' is layin' down."

"Yes; I want to see Uncle George, and I want to see you too, mammy," said the young man, waiting to be recognized.

"Father in Heaven! Oh, Gyawge! its de young marster!" exclaimed the old woman, sinking down as if unable to stand, and resting her head against the door post, while she covered her face with her patched, but clean cotton apron, and sobbed convulsively with a piteous moaning cry.

Throwing the bridle reins to one of the little negroes who had rushed out, the young man met Uncle George, who hobbled quickly but painfully forward, and clasped him in his arms.

"Young marster," he exclaimed, while the tears ran down his furrowed cheeks, "God be praised dat my ole eyes has lasted to see you once mo'! We couldn't hear nothin', an we thought you was wid de angels."

"Young marster—baby—" said the old woman, stopping her crooning chant, but with her apron still covering her face, "come here honey an' lay your head in your ole mammy's lap, an' say dem same little pr'ars once mo' an' your ole mammy 'll be ready to go home to your ma."

The young man knelt by the side of the old woman, threw his arms around her neck, and for a moment sobbed upon her bosom—that loving bosom which he knew, with all his faults, had enshrined him as a perfect creature.

Then, rising to his feet, he took the old woman by the arm to assist her to arise and exclaimed, banteringly :

“There, mammy ; we hysterical old ladies can’t feel good till we’ve had our little cry, and now we feel better ; don’t we ? ”

“Baby ! ” said the old woman, without moving or uncovering her face while she smothered a sob, “Dick ? ”

“Why, bless the ole woman ! ” exclaimed the young man, laughing and shaking her by the shoulders. “Dick’s as sound as a drum, as lively as a lark, and twice as musical as both together. He’ll be here in an hour or so if he does not fly off at a tangent to see Jane. So now hop up, old woman, that’s a good mammy, and see if you can’t find me a piece of ashcake and some meat, for I’m half starved, and want to ‘break bread’ with you.”

“Bless de chile—ashcake an’ meat ! Hongry for ashcake an’ meat ! Oh, my po’ ole mistis ! But honey, it’s all I’s got to give you—de Lawd have messy ’pon us—ashcake an’ meat ; an’ nary fatted calf—not even a pullet or a ole hen ! Here, little Dick,” she added, wiping the tears from her eyes as she arose to her feet, “put de hoss on dat grass in de gyarden—he don’t look like he’d run ’way from dat—an’ you run to spring an’ fetch some water to wash de ashcake for your po’ ole gran’mammy’s blessed lam. Be pyeart, now—your uncle’s a comin’ bimeby. Young marster, you mus’ ’scuse your po’ ole mammy for not havin’ nothin’ better for you dan ashcake an’ meat. Prudence, chile, git de fryin’ pan, an’ look in de chis’ your gran’dady’s a settin’ on, an’ git de meat. Dar’s two big ashcakes in, but git de sifter, an’ put in one mo’, your uncle’s a comin’ bimeby.”

The old woman ran on in this way, without pausing for a word from any one, as if talking in order to arrest, or

keep in subjection, the process of thinking, until the meat had been produced from the chest, and she had cut from the small square chunk, carefully unwrapped from a clean white cloth, five nice thin slices.

"Hold on, mammy!" exclaimed the young master, as the old woman commenced to wrap up the precious little chunk again. "Cut it all up! I'm as hungry as a wolf, and there is only one slice apiece!"

"Bless de chile! Honey, dat's all for you. Me an' Gyawge an' de chil'n don't want to be gorgin' no mo' meat to-day."

"Cut it all up, old woman," persisted the young man, "I'm going to help Uncle George an' de chil'n' to eat you out of house and home before Dick get's here, for he will bring a wagon load of provisions 'an' sugar an' coffy an' tea an' things.'"

"Young marster, honey," said the old woman, pausing, and looking at him seriously, but smiling at his old trick of mimicking her, "has you done bought sugar an' coffy an' tea an' things?"

'Wait and see!' laughed the young man.

"Now, honey," said the old woman, still more seriously, "times is done changed. Everybody in dis country is satisfied wid bread an' a little meat. Is you able to 'ford dat 'stravagance?"

"Cheer up, old woman," said the young man, slapping her on the shoulder, and giving her a little shake, "haven't you always said that the rainy days couldn't take the 'shunshine' out of me? Well, neither can war take all the gold out of my pocket. I am rich; oh, you don't know rich. We will build up all the houses again, and have a plenty to eat and wear, and get flannels again for you and Uncle George, and bring all the folks back

that we can find, and build up Bethel church again, and—oh, we'll forget there ever was a war."

Before the playfully-given list of good times coming was half completed, the old woman had planted herself in Uncle George's lap, and, with her apron over her face, was again indulging that weird, crooning chant which is, with her race, the expression given to emotions of joy or grief, and particularly to a blending of those emotions that are too great for utterance in words.

After the meat was done, and the ashcakes washed, broken in pieces and placed on the kneading tray, mammy, who had decided that the young master should eat alone at the "first table," but had been headed off by the young man's declaration that he came to "break bread" *with* and not before them, sent the two children to the old garden spot to "see ef dat hoss don't git his belly full an' den kick up his heels an' leave," and looking out to assure herself that the lank animal had not already played the young master that shabby trick, she put the frying-pan on the chest and announced dinner.

"We's fashionable folks, you see, honey," said the old woman, placing a torn quilt to soften a three-legged stool for the young master; "since de war we has late breakfast, later dinner, and supper is so late dat we goes to bed an' forgets to have it."

As the three dipped their bread into the hot grease and dexterously turned it about to avoid a loss of the precious fluid on its way to the mouth, mammy, who seemed to be going through the ceremony for form's sake, while Uncle George's whole being seemed absorbed in the business, gave the young man a brief history of such of the former slaves as she had been able to hear from. When she came to speak of Marienne, she said:

“I has hopes dat she’s livin’ yet, but dar has been all sorts o’ rumors an’ some said dey kilt her an’ some said dey done her wuss ’n dat, an’ some said she got away from ’em. My Henry fetched a letter from Barrensville dat he said was for me, de very day he got kilt. We all said de writin’ looked prim like marmsell an’ we was sure ’twas from her, but nobody never read it, for I was des startin’ over to Mars’ Major Anderson’s, to get Miss Clare to read it, when dem men come to steal de cot’n an’ we had de row an’ got all de place burnt up agin. You see we had made a right smart o’ cot’n wid de steers an’ had done ginned de lint room full, an’ our press was done ’stroyed at de fust burnin’, an’ Henry went to see if he could git it baled at Mr. Malone’s press close to Barrensville, es we had to haul it dar, anyhow, to sell, an’ he had done made de ’rangements, an’ come home bringin’ dat letter, an’ less ’n two hours here come fo’ army wagins an’ dey said de gov’ment was gwine to have de cot’n baled for us, an’ for us to load it on de wagins. Den de folks said ’twas a trick to rob us out o’ de cot’n, an’ we wouldn’t have nothin’ to buy close an’ things for de winter; an’ dey got mad an’ said dey’d die befo’ anybody should haul dat cot’n way from dar. Den dis ole man dat’s stuffin’ hissself wid meat an’ gravy so sanctymonious—an’ he has done eat a poun’ o’ meat ef he has eat a pinch, like dar never was no meat befo’ an’ never would be no meat herearter—an’ dis same ole man dat’s munchin’ his jaws like his life pended on it, he got de ole nigger up in him, an’ got to snortin’ an’ cavortin’ roun’, an’ one o’ de sogers knocked him in de head wid de but-’een o’ his gun. Wid dat my Henry—you know my boys won’t ’low nobody to ’pose on nobody, ’specially ef it’s dar daddy, an’ niggers, ginnerally, is got a heap more justice in em dan

some white folks—well, Henry snatched a standard out'n one o' de wagins an' made for de man dat hit his daddy, an' he run in de lint room, dat was full to de roof, an' shot Henry dead in his tracks. But dat second dat de gun flashed, de whole lint room flashed up an' dai soger was dead befo' my po' Henry was. Well, de tother sogers got on de wagins an' left in a hurry, an' de folks couldn't git de man out'n de fire, a' he was most burnt up intirely. De folks knowed what was comin' nex' an' dat dey'd be 'cused o' killin dat man an' burnin' 'im up, an' dey got dere bed-clo's an' things an' put out for de bottom, men, women an' chil'n, 'cept me an' Gyawge an' dem po' little chil'n o' Henry's. Dey 'swaded me to go, an' said dey'd carry Gyawge on a bed, but he was hurt mighty bad, an' I was feard 'twould kill 'im, and I was feard dey'd burn my po' Henry's dead body for 'taliation'—dat's what dey calls it, an' dat's de way dey wucks it, 'taliates on folks for what can't be helped an' for what is dar own fault—so I 'terminated not to leave. Well, dat night dey come swarmin' an' ragin' like dey did dat fust night. Dey was mighty mad ! Dey burnt all de huts Gyawge had made de folks build, an' even knocked down de chimblys dat had stood 'tother burnin'. When dey come I had laid po' Henry out an' I made dat ole man play dead too ; an' for all he's stuffin' meat an' gravy so lively now, like he never 'spects to see no mo' 'till de day 'o judgment, he played dead wuss'n a 'possum. Well, dat saved dis po' ole shanty, for when I tole 'em I was gwine to stay in dar, an' dey could burn me up if dey wanted to, a man wid a sode tol' 'em to go 'way from dar if dey wan't de born chil'n of de ole boy hisself, an' den dey lemme 'lone.

“Nex' day dey come an' hunt for de folks in de bot-

tom, an' ketched 'em most all. De men dey put in de army, an' de wimmin dey put in de houses at Barrensville dat dey driv' de white folks out'n, an' gin 'em rations an' things.

“But for your ma's brother, your good uncle, Mars' Major Anderson, an' I know dar's a crown for him in glory, me an' Gyawge an' dem po' little chil'n would o' starved; for dis ole man ain't been fitt'n for nothin' since. Mars' Major sont us a bushel o' meal every week, an' when he got any meat he sont us some o' dat; an' dat's de reason, young marster, honey, dat we's here an' able to dip in de gravy wid you dis blessed day, while our hearts is hangin' on de cross o' agony at de 'membrance of all de troubles, an' at seein' de sainted ole mistises baby fetched down to dis!”

Again the poor old woman—whose eyes had frequently exuded tears slowly, while Uncle George would bite his meat savagely and chew it viciously, as if he were a cannibal, and knew it to be Turchin and his whole brigade—threw her apron over her head, and commenced her crooning moan.

“Cheer up, old woman, you dear old soul!” said the young man, cheerily, springing to his feet and taking Uncle George's pipe out of a chink in the cabin, “I am worth a dozen dead paupers yet. You wait and see! But Dick will be here presently, and I know you and Uncle George want to hold a camp-meeting over him, so I'll go over to uncle's. I am dying to see my little cousins once more. Has uncle any——”

“Yes, honey,” said the old woman, answering the question he hesitated to put into words, “he's got meat an' bread bofe, an' I 'speak he's got some coffee an' things by dis time. He's fared better'n most o' de big white fokes, but

dey's been cold an' hongry many a time. De Yankees took or tore up all de beds an' things, but he's got two beds an' some extra blankets he got since de s'rendr."

As the young man's Rosinante proved not to have shown himself the base ingrate which mammy suspected him as being, he mounted him and struck out through the tall weeds in a straight line for his uncle's, just as Dick made his appearance on what was once the east road. We will not enroach upon the "camp-meeting" scenes inaugurated by Dick's arrival. The Caucasian cannot look upon the African in his true character, when free from the restraint of a superior presence, without being amused at his abject surrender to every emotion and impulse of feeling, and it is, therefore, manifestly improper that he should look upon those scenes that break up the deepest fountains of feeling in his simple bosom.

After it was all over, Dick declared that the house was too close for an old soldier, and made a fire out in front of the door, after the darkness had begun to gather around. All sat near and listened to his wonderful tales of battle, blood and death, till mammy felt assured that her boy was a veritable hero, Uncle George, that he carried a charmed life, and the little nephew and niece, with eyes bulged out and mouth agape, wondered if this might not be the mighty man of old who slew the Philistines.

"An' you ain't bin a totin' no cannon balls around inside o' you," queried mammy, "es your daddy said you'd be?"

"No'm; an' not much o' anything else, for de bes' part o' de time! Bless de Lawd, if dem cannon balls had o' bin Dutch cheeses, an' we could o' got 'em inside o' us by de right road, we'd bin fightin' dar till yet!"

Just at this moment a shrill whistle was heard, some distance out in the darkness, and a strong voice called :

“Corporal o’ de gyard ! Pos’ number one !”

“Who’s dat ?” shouted Dick, jumping to his feet, and laying his hand upon the hilt of a sabre-bayonet, which he had ‘captured honestly’ in Virginia, and had avowed his determination to wear during the remainder of his natural life.

“Fren’,” replied the voice.

“Stop dar, fren’, an’ give de countersine !”

“Capn’ Dick Anderson Styode !” responded the voice.

“Dat’s pretty good es fur es it goes, but ’twont pass you. Blate agin !”

“Sudgent Peter Dillard ! How’s dat ?”

“Pretty good, Br’er Peter—howdy ! but stan’ dar ! Which side is you on ?”

“‘He Pluribuster Ukerum !’ is de motto on our flag.”

“I don’t know nothin’ bout no outlandish motters ! Who’s you fitin’ for ?”

“John Brown’s sole !”

“Well, stan’ dar ! Halt ! Dat’s what we’s bin a fitin’ agin’, an’ it got de under holt on us, didn’t play fair, an’ scrambled roun’ till it got our back on de groun’ an’ we had to s’render. I’s bin mad ever since, an’ I never will be in a rale good humor agin ef some o’ ’em don’t s’render to me. So pull out a white flag, Br’er Peter, an’ knock under, ef you don’t want dis sode to tickle your haslet !”

“All right,” said Peter, flourishing a dingy handkerchief. “I surrenders to Cap’n Dick Anderson Styode an’ dat sode. I always was feared o’ cold steel !”

After much handshaking and mutual congratulations, Uncle George inquired, very soberly :

“Peter, you made a mighty good beginnin’, but what made you turn again us and fite on t’other side?”

“Well, you see, dey said dey was fightin’, bleedin’ an’ dyin’ an’ stroyin’ munny, all for de good o’ de niggers, an’ we ought to help ’em. An’ ’sides dat dey had me in a mighty tight place, ’cused o’ killin’ dat soger, an’ I was afeared dey’d stretch my neck. But es for fightin’, does you ’member how I knocked ’em seven ways for Sunday, dat day here?”

“Yes.”

“Well, dats de onlyest fightin’ I has done in dis war, ’cept de nex’ night, an’ a little scrimmage nex’ day at Barrensville, when dey tried to strip Marmsell, an’ killed po’ Fox, an’ beat Mr. Deadrick’s brains out.”

“Well, what you do in de war den?”

“Do! I done what de rest of ’em done! I went for de silver spoons, an’ watches, an’ things es big es anybody! An’ I sold ’em an’ sont de most o’ de munny to my ole mistis for her an’ de folks to git along on! What did you speck I done?”

“Well, well, well!” said mammy, musingly. “Polly Dillard tole me you was keepin’ ’em all from starvin’ an’ dat her ole mistis was wonderin’ ef all dat munny was hones’ munny.”

“Hones’ munny!” exclaimed Peter, with some show of indignation, “of course ’twas hones’ munny! ’Twas war munny, an I spose dat’s hones’ munny! Everybody—preachers an’ all—was grabbin’ for all dey could git, an’ I’d like to know what ’twas ef ’twant hones’ munny! Look at dat!” and the negro displayed a lady’s watch of medium size, encrusted with small diamonds, set in beautiful and elaborate designs of sprays and flowers. “Dat’s for de ole mistis!”

“ Where did it come from, Br’er Peter ? ” asked Dick, taking the watch in his hand and examining it by the firelight, while his eyes fairly glistened with the forbidden passion of covetousness.

“ Down in Gyawgy, man ! ” replied Peter, enthusiastically, as he noticed Dick’s unconcealable display of the evil passion. “ Ef I’d o’ bin able to save all I got, dar’d o’ bin’ enough to buy out a steamboat ! ”

“ Br’er Peter,” said Dick, sadly, “ lookin’ at dat watch makes me feel lonesome ! It makes me feel sort o’ mad an’ sort o’ sorry ! We had so many good chances to git everyting in de worl’ ! But Mars’ Uncle Robert told us to ’have ourselves, an’ we ’bayed orders ! ”

“ Well,” responded Peter, as if feeling called on to defend his character as a disciplined soldier. “ So did we ’bay orders ! Ole Bill, es we calls ’im, told us to forage liberal, an’ you bet we ’bayed orders ! ”

“ But, whar was all de officers ? ” asked Dick, enviously ; “ de cap’ns an’ kurnels an’ sich, when you all was gittin’ de watches an’ things ? ”

“ Officers bedoged,” replied Peter contemptuously ; “ cap’ns an’ kurnels ! Oh Lordy ! An’ sides dat, wan’t Ole Bill de head boss o’ all de officers ! ”

“ Well, well ! ” exclaimed Dick, slapping his knee for emphasis to what he was about to say, “ Mars’ Uncle Robert is de greates’ man dat ever lived, or ever will live, not even excusin’ ole marster dat dey kilt in ole Ferginny, but ef we ever has another war, I wants, when we goes into Pennsylvany, an’ dem big, rich countries, for Mars’ Uncle Robert to take holiday an’ let some old Bill, Tom, or Harry, be de head boss o’ de officers ! Dat’s all I wants ! It’ll be ‘ oh Lordy ’ den, sho’ ’nuff ! ”

“ Did you all go into Pennsylvany an’ dem big rich

countries, an' didn't git no watches, an' jewelry, an' spoons, nor nothin'," asked Peter, compassionately.

"Nary watch, nor jewel, nor spoon, nor nothin'!" replied Dick, sadly. "But," he added, firing up, "you des ought o' seed de guns, an' de cannons, an de sodes, an' de dead hosses and sogers dat we got, man ! Oh man !" he continued, becoming enthused with his subject, "I has marched over 'em scattered for miles on top o' miles ! Thick es co'n stalks in de field ! Knapsacks, haversacks, canteens, blankets an' hats ! Ba'nets, guns, sodes, pistols, cannons an' caysons ! Boxes on top o' boxes, full of ammernition, physic, doctors'-tools an' sich. Wagon loads on top o' wagon load o' tents, gum-blankets, clo'es, boots an' shoes, canned-vidles, sugar, pickles, Bibles, preserves, playin'-cards, sardines, love-letters, hard-tack an' things ! Salem camp-grouns on top o' Salem camp-grouns full o' dead sogers, dead hosses, busted caysons, captured cannons, harness, wheels, drums, ambers-lanches, brass-horns, wagins, tin-pans, blackin'-brushes, spy-glasses, an' everything ! Mixed an' messed up everywhar an' which way, every sort of fashion, worl' widout 'een !"

"An' who slewed all o' dem things?" asked Peter, gazing at his enthused companion with unconcealed admiration.

"We all !" responded Dick, proudly. "Me an' Mars' Chyarles, an Mars' Uncle Robert, an' de boys !"

"An' den," said Peter, musingly, "arter you slewed all dem sogers an' things, you all marched whar dar want nothin' but wimmin an' chil'n an' ole men, or young men dat was feard to fite, an' didn't git no plunder ?"

"Nary plun !" said Dick, regretfully. "Mars' Uncle Robert an' all de officers said 'twas robbin', an' we thought dey knowed best."

Peter hung his head for a full minute in deep thought, while ever and anon his side-wise glance sought Dick, who, with his back to the fire, and a coat skirt under each arm, in true Old Virginia fashion, was gazing sadly out into the darkness. Finally, Peter seemed to have formed a high resolve, and fumbling in his pocket, he exclaimed :

"Look here, Dick ! I's done surrendered to you, ain't I ?"

"Yes," said Dick, turning to face his companion, "to me an' dis sode."

"An' I's your prisoner, ain't I ?"

"Well, it 'pears dat way to me an' dis sode !"

"Yes ; I's your prisoner. Here, take dis watch !" exclaimed Peter, thrusting the sparkling treasure into Dick's face.

"What !" exclaimed Dick, in amazement.

"Yes ! take dat watch ! It's your'n, I say ! Dat's far. We made our prisoners give up all dey had, an' I ain't a nigger dat don't practice what I preaches. Since I come to think on it, I don't speck my ole mistis would have it, nohow ! an' ef you wants to you can give it to Jane, when you an' her gits married. Is dat all right !"

"You bet, man !" exclaimed Dick, standing on one foot, and "cutting the pigeon's wing" with the other thrust out behind him, while he turned the sparkling trinket about to admire its glitter in the fire-light.

"Ole 'oman," said Peter, addressing mammy. "I likes Dick ; his got hones' principles ; but I know ef he'd o' bin in our army, he'd forgot 'em, an' done es bad es I done. A nigger will be a nigger, but you know dat 'taint in de nater of em, to do no big robbin' an' plunderin', 'cept dey's lead into it. Dar's mighty few of 'em dat won't keep from bein' cold an' hungry, no matter

who owns de things dat'll warm 'em, an' fill 'em up ; but es for big devilment ; taint in 'em. It's agin dar natur, onless dey's lead into it by white folkes, or de sperrits o' evil in de form o' white fokes. Dick ain't never bin tempted once ! He's a lucky nigger, an' when he marries Jane, maby it'll bring luck into my fambly. I knowed all de time in Gyawgy an' de Car'lina dat de right sperrit wan't in me, an' I has felt like fitin' many a time, when I has seed sogers snatchin' yearrings an' things from ladies dat 'minded me of our own white fokes. Ef 'twas right, war is a mighty nice thing—I mean our sort, not de sort Dick's bin in—an' I would'nt mind keepin' on at it, but I couldn't help thinkin' sometimes when I'd go back to a house we had robbed an' maby 'bused de folks, an' find de wimmin an' chil'n lookin' hongry an' cold, an' maby cryin', dat it was sort o' hard on dem. But de motto in Ole Bill's army was : ' It's more blessed to rob, dan to be robbed,' an' dat looks like it had reason in it an' good sense too, till you come to 'member if *anybody* robs, den *somebody* has got to be robbed, an' dat all can't be blessed alike in dat.

“ But I must be movin' on. I ain't bin home yet. Saw your fire an' thought I'd pay my 'spects. Come, Dick, boy ! go home wid me ! I know you wants to show Jane dat watch, an' talk 'bout de moon an' stars ! ”

“ Mammy,” said Dick, dusting himself with his hands. “ I thought I'd wait till mornin', but I know Jane'd like to see dis watch.”

“ Go long, boy,” said mammy, playfully striking at him ; “ you's de same cymlin'-headed nigger dat you use to be. Jane'd ruther see you dan a bushel o' dem jimcrack watches ! ”

CHAPTER XXV.

BEGINNING ANEW.

*"Cover the ancient picture !
Its lesson is conned and known,
Forever burst is the stricture
That bound the people down !"*

—E. S. GREGORY'S HIEROGLYPHIC.

*"The lord is on the level
With all his former fiefs,
And shadows of the devil
Steal o'er the hieroglyphs !"*

—THE SAME.—ANOTHER VERSION.

A FEW days after Mr. Stewart's arrival in the neighborhood of his destroyed home, wagon loads of lumber commenced to arrive at the plantation, and all the idle negroes in the vicinity, who were willing to work, were put into the woods to get out timbers for new cabins, stables, a gin-house and press, and to "maul" rails to enclose the wild waste of fertile fields. Carpenters were employed, brick masons were hunted up and put to work, and before Mr. Conrad arrived, bringing something over ten thousand dollars, in addition to the two thousand sent by check on a New Orleans bank, all the cash in Mr. Stewart's hands, amounting to nearly three thousand dollars, had been paid out for labor, materials and supplies, all of which, particularly the latter, could be had only at ruinously high prices.

The negroes seemed to think that freedom meant only

exemption from labor and exertion of any kind, and many, particularly those who had been quartered and fed at Barrensville, Huntsville, Decatur and other adjacent posts, were looking forward, with idle and patient indifference, to the time, when, by some mysterious means, they did not know or trouble themselves to inquire what, they should be possessed of fine clothing, horses and carriages, and live like "white fokes." Numbers of them refused to work on any terms. They could see no difference, under the teachings of that "matchless benevolence" which had already begun the fearful task of firing the simple hearts of the former slaves against their former masters, between "being a nigger for pay" and being a slave under the outlawed statutes of a defunct commonwealth; and the few of the better and more intelligent class, who were willing to help redeem the country from waste, demanded the most exorbitant prices for any labor but that done in the field "for sheers," which was not deemed to be "unbecoming to freemen," provided the white people fed and groomed the stock. The "matchless benevolence of a quick forgiving foe" sought to inspire the negro with the dignity of a Roman Senator before he had acquired the necessary self-reliance to earn a shirt to cover his nakedness.

Mr. Stewart found other difficulties in his way at the outset. The few of his former slaves whom he had been able to find, attended cheerfully, as of old, to all the menial duties of the plantation; but the hired common laborers who were "mauling rails" and cleaning up and clearing off the fields, mutinied when he hired skilled labor—carpenters and bricklayers—and paid them three dollars per day; just double what he was paying themselves. They represented that the day of general equality

had come, that their wages must be raised to three dollars per day and that “’scrimination in de payin’ o’ wages tends to stick up some o’ de human fambly, an’ to ’stablish a new sort o’ haristockry more ojious dan dem what de nation fit, bled an’ died to bust up.” This sentiment was delivered by the orator of the striking laborers, and as they left the yard, after having been told by Mr. Stewart that he had no further use for them, one congratulated the proud speaker with the remark, “Tell you, Buck, de boss o’ de League couldn’t o’ said it better his own self!”

But Dick’s wise political economy solved the knotty problem and brought peace into the camp.

“Mars’ Chyarles,” he said, that night, “es Br’er Peter says, ‘a nigger is gwine to be a nigger, dead or ’live, slave or free,’ an’ me an’ him has done put our heads together, an’ we is gwine to play de ’mancipation proclamation game on ’em. ’Course we can’t ’ford to pay dem grubbers three dollars a day for dat sort o’ wuck, an’ es we can’t put dem up to de cyarpenters, we’s gwine to pull de cyarpenters down to dem. So we want you an’ Mars’ Frank Conrad to issue ’mancipation proclamation number two, dat you wont pay no nigger more’n one dollar’n a half a day for nuthin’, not even ef he was de boss cyarpenter on de temple o’ freedom. You ’tend to dat an’ me’n Br’er Peter ’ll fix de balance an’ we wont lose nary cyarpenter nor nuthin’, an’ we’ll have all o’ dem grubbers prancin’ back here; for grub is gittin’ mighty seace wid ’em, since de Buro has done quit flingin’ out de rashuns so liberal.”

This plan worked like a charm, and soon Dick had his usual complement of over thirty common laborers, in addition to the six carpenters and masons. But he drew every Saturday afternoon a secret service fund of fifty-four

dollars, and that night he and the skilled laborers would hold a "league meeting" all to themselves. So everything went merrily and briskly forward, and before the frosts of November had shed their gold and purple upon the forests, comfortable cabins, a large gin-house, a press, and commodious stables had been erected, and a good substantial dwelling stood upon the former site of "The Oaks" mansion; while the thousand and odd acres of cleared land had been enclosed, grubbed and partly cleaned off, and fifteen double ploughs were tearing the four-year-old green-brier roots, preparatory to getting the land into condition to make a crop the next year.

"Stewart," said Mr. Conrad, one pleasant November afternoon, as they sat on the front porch, looking at the busy raking and burning of weeds and briers, going on in the distance ahead of the ploughs, "I like this country, its soil, climate and people, and I feel quite sure I shall enjoy the simple easy life of a well-to-do planter. It is pleasant to watch these laborers, and to hear their songs and shouts while at work, and the busy bustle which they make about the stables and quarters, morning, noon and night, but there is one thing which I do not like. 'Mammy,' dear old soul, is an excellent housekeeper, and quite a character as an aristocrat among the colored people, but the house looks lonely without the presence of a lady. One can hardly throw off the feeling of unrest which belongs to camp life, and feel that he is really anchored and in no danger of receiving orders to march. You have not divulged to me the secrets of the letter which you received last night, and which I know, has given you joy as well as pain, and I have determined to get rid of you for a month or two, if possible. Let us look at the prospects around us. We have a well-stocked

plantation, a sufficiency of provisions and forage, and are greatly better off than any other planters in the country. We shall make next year, at least three hundred bales of cotton, worth, at less than present prices, say, thirty thousand dollars. One half to the labor, leaves us fifteen thousand, and one third of that for current expenses, leaves us a net income of ten thousand. That is a safe calculation and not a bad showing, and we have enough cash on hand to spare, say, two thousand dollars *for a trip to Europe.*”

“Ah! my friend,” said Mr. Stewart, sadly, “think of the tortures of Tantalus, and spare me. The joy which my letter gave me was the assurance that one of the best friends I have on earth is alive and well. You have heard me speak of Marienne D’Elfons, and know of the efforts I have made, by inquiries through the mail, to learn something of her fate. The letter is from herself, and it brings me tidings of Miss Seymour also. Your cousin, while she cannot now marry me, will never marry any other. That thought must content me, and be the chief element of my happiness for —— years. And, besides, we should be acting unwisely, considering the present unsettled condition of the country, to expend one dollar more than is absolutely necessary. Your statement of the outlook would be a safe one to count on, were it not for the fact that agencies are being brought to bear, whose influence you have not considered, and which cannot yet be calculated, but which make Flournoy’s advice to us, ‘not to enumerate our spring chickens before king frost and the setting hen have settled the matter of incubation, and the weasels have had their showing at the adolescent poultry,’ words of the profoundest wisdom.”

“But no adverse human agencies can be brought to

bear to prevent eight hundred acres of this fertile land from producing, at the lowest calculation, three hundred bales of cotton ! ”

“ Only *favorable* human agency can make those fertile acres produce one pound of cotton. That useful emblem, of civilization is like civilization itself. It requires cultivation. If the ‘spirit of universal freedom’ shall prevent the destruction of the weeds and briars, which lusty nature causes to spring up, then the tender germs from the seeds we shall sow will wither and perish without fruiting, as did the ancient civilization of the mound-builders and cave and cliff-dwellers, of which we have no token except such as their physical labor left.”

“ But we have already secured the labor that is to protect our ‘civilization’ from the weeds of ‘universal freedom.’ In the vegetable kingdom, at least, my motto shall be, ‘down with freedom,’ where it wars upon civilization ! Cotton blossoms before ragweeds, forever ! ”

“ Your abolition poet, John R. Lowell, tells us that weeds are blossoms, only our purblind visions cannot see them so.”

“ Then I shall have to amend my motto, and say. ‘The cotton blossoms of civilization before the ragwort blossoms of universal and untrammelled freedom forever ! ’ ”

“ Yes, and unless I mistake the signs of the times, the instinct of self-preservation will soon force us to leave this country, or to apply your motto to the political and social relations around us.”

“ What do you mean ? ”

“ That the negroes, so far from feeling grateful to us for using our money to provide good homes, and the means of subsistence for them, are being made to feel angry, because we shall derive profit from their labor.

They are being blinded to the mutuality of dependence in our new relations, as in the old ; and are being taught that they will be grievously wronged if we shall be enabled, without physical toil, to live upon the proceeds of their labor, in a style which they cannot imitate. As a people, they are not endowed with a liberal share of the reasoning faculty. The arguments which are used upon them by the adventurers from among the camp-followers of the Federal armies, or by the gentle spirits, who did not get ‘fighting mad,’ as Dick expresses it, and come South until after the close of the war, when clinched by the assertion, that they ‘fought bled and died,’ for the ‘poor down-trodden slave,’ are simply unanswerable to their simple minds. Freedom, is an accomplished fact, which they can understand ; and they can understand, also, that the military power of the government gave them their freedom, after a long and bloody war, in which countless thousands of lives were sacrificed. Beyond these two simple facts their simple minds find only chaos ; and those who, in order to accomplish selfish ends, have gone, and shall go among them, to poison their minds against the white people of the South, and change the love which they have heretofore entertained for their owners to hatred, will find them unable to combat even the most absurd arguments or statements—the most supremely ridiculous assertions, that are backed by the solemn assurance that the wily plotter, ‘shed his blood and treasure’ only on account of a disinterested love for the poor slaves, whom the ‘Heaven-defying hell-hounds of the South’ had robbed of their ‘God-given freedom.’ My *ante bellum* experience with those malevolent spirits, was such as to cause me to feel now that our sole hope for the preserva-

tion of peace and quiet, and the safety of our property and persons, lies in such forbearance of the former slaves as the principles of Christianity, which we labored to instil into their hearts and minds, shall lead them to exercise, despite the evil influences surrounding them—in this and in our own forbearance and courage.”

“Then you think John Brown’s soul is still ‘marching on,’” laughed Mr. Conrad, “and is still bent upon the villainy that caused it to be freed from its earthly tabernacle, eh?”

“Yes; and that philanthropic spirit has us at a disadvantage at last, without armor, shield or buckler! We hope for no mercy from the philanthropic huntsmen, and must curry favor with the pack. Those that cannot be won over again must be intimidated!”

“But suppose you should not succeed in doing either?”

“Never fear!” exclaimed the young man, while a sparkle as from a slumbering fire arose to his eyes for a moment. “Our forefathers did not sacrifice their blood for this beautiful country, and give New England their gold for slaves to cut down its forests in order that they might rear a pusillanimous progeny who would suffer the representatives of their gold, backed by its philanthropic receivers, to drive them from their birth-right. This is our country, and when we cease to rule it, it will be a howling wilderness!”

“Ah! my friend,” said Mr. Conrad, sadly, “you Southern people are a very hot-headed race!”

“And, well we may be,” said the young man, impulsively, “In an evil hour, our ancestors, who were too noble and generous to suspect others of mean, low trickery, leagued us with New England, and the gentle Puritan spirit of that country has been practicing the arts of the

bull-baiter upon us ever since. And now, since, by the exercise of arts, such as their forefathers would have sworn could only have been inspired by the 'bad angel,' they have made tools of better people and have overpowered us, they are plotting to make the amiable, but emotional and consequently easily phrenzied negro, the Matadore to give us the *coup de grace*."

"What is it you think they are doing now?"

"Think? I don't think! I know! They succeeded in firing the heart of the whole North against us, and they are now seeking to so fire the negroes' hearts, as to make it impossible for us to steer clear of the Scylla of resistance to the government, without falling into the Charybdis of servile insurrection and anarchy!"

"My dear fellow," exclaimed Mr. Conrad, with a laugh, "if your evil forebodings are well founded there is no safety but in flight!"

"It is a more serious matter than you can at present understand," said the young man, laughing at his friend's expression of affected terror, "and there would be but little hope for the South, were it not for three things: First, our people can bend before a storm without being broken as an inferior people would be; second, the negro is very far from being the savage which the fanatics think he is; and third, New England fanaticism cannot 'ride upon the whirlwind and direct the storm,' after the passion of the North shall have fallen below the white heat."

"You spoke of other hearts being fired; what has occurred, of late, to fire your Southern heart?"

"It has been fired toward Puritanism ever since I knew the difference between political faith and fanaticism, and ascertained that there was no room for honor and

patriotism in hearts filled with self-interest and Puritanism."

"But what has occurred of late to excite you? Are not matters wearing as satisfactory an aspect as you could expect under the present circumstances of the country?"

"Yes; on the surface! But did not more than half of our negroes stop work yesterday, and ride our horses and mules to Barrensville to attend a League meeting? What are these oath-bound leagues to accomplish? And didn't the negroes tell you plainly that they intend to ride our animals—I was so informed—as often as they saw proper to attend these meetings, or else they would quit the place and let you 'wuck your own cotton patch? And isn't a trifling fellow, by the name of Wheeless, collecting all the trifling, thriftless negroes on the Deaderick plantations, and other abandoned lands, forming leagues, and marching through the country with flags and drums, leading thieving mobs to demoralize the laborers and frighten women and children?"

"Well; what of it all? The silly antics of a crazy fanatic signify nothing; and what is the loss of a day's labor now and then? It will not occur oftener than once or twice a month, I fancy."

"Of course, it is all nothing. The first cool breath of air that tells the sweltering and belated Texan of a coming Norther is nothing! So also is the first warm blast from the Libyan Desert that foretells the coming of a sirocco. They are nothing; but the natives of those countries fly from them as from a pestilence."

"My dear fellow," laughed Mr. Conrad, "I fear you are getting bilious. I shall have to give you a cathartic!"

"I will take anything you may prescribe," returned the young man, also laughing, "if you will agree to guar-

antee me against being dosed with poison, as threatened by a pious Boston parson."

"My dear fellow, you are too hard upon our Puritan brethren of New England. You should bear in mind, that there are lunatics in other countries besides Massachusetts and other Puritan strongholds."

"I do not forget that fact ; but the difference is that in other countries they are put into the asylums, while in Massachusetts, and New England generally, they are made bishops, clergymen and civil officers."

"It is just such talk as that, which you Southern hot-heads have been iudulging in for a generation, that has exasperated our Puritan brothers, and that causes them now to seek retaliation or vengeance."

"Yes ; we ought to be more cautious now. As we have our head in the lion's mouth, we should not twist his tail. But we can't help it ! As for retaliation, that is their religion. It is a cure for all ills. They would admire the Saviour much more, if he had commanded the hosts of Heaven to flay alive those who spat upon him."

"Do you recollect your theory, and that of many others, about Puritan blood and fanaticism ? You will soon make me believe that you have some of that blood in your veins."

"There is a tradition in our family that there is a bar-sinister of that kind upon our escutcheon, and I am inclined to believe it ; for I often feel that there are two natures, entirely antagonistic, within me. One is revengeful, and almost capable of stooping to Puritan methods, and the other thoroughly contemns and despises the first."

"No ; you are only a typical Southerner. But will you not give me the particulars of the tidings from my

little cousin? That will be a more agreeable subject to both of us."

"You shall read for yourself," replied the young man, producing from his pocket the letter already alluded to; "and you must amuse yourself until this evening, for I shall ride over to see Flournoy and his bride, my little cousin. I may go on and take tea with Howard, but I shall be home to-night."

After Mr. Stewart had galloped away upon Selim, Jr., a representative of the Randolph stock which he had left at "The Oaks," a three-year-old colt, when he left for Virginia in 1861, and had purchased of a Federal officer on his return, Mr. Conrad applied himself to the voluminous epistle, of which we shall give only such parts as are necessary to the thread of our narrative.

It was dated, Paris, October the 4th, 1865; and after speaking of numerous letters that had been written at other times, and of various other matters; the writer spoke of herself:

"An item in the Northern papers, stating that 'Cesare D'Elfons had been killed at Barrensville, Alabama, in an effort to rescue from arrest his sister, who had murdered a Federal officer,' attracted the attention of relatives in New Orleans, of whose existence I had no knowledge. They visited me in the Ohio prison, and seemed to have no very serious difficulty in procuring my release.

"One of these was a cousin, Cesare D'Elfons, a native of France, and a resident of Paris, but an amateur Confederate soldier, who had fought under you at Williamsburg, and who gave me a very amusing account of the 'first time he was ever made to bow before an enemy;' and the other was *my half sister*—Miss Beatrice D'Elfons—and no less a person than the eccentric lady whom you

met on the cars in the spring of 1861, and who sent me the fateful diamond.

“My father was married to her mother, at Boston, in the year 1828, and within less than a year he killed his brother-in-law, in a quarrel over a club-room card table. He was tried and acquitted, but his wife refused to see him again, and he left Boston for New Orleans, a few months after the birth of his child, without having been permitted to see her. His wife got a divorce, and married again, but was soon divorced a second time, and resumed the name of D’Elfons, on her daughter’s account. My father emancipated my mother, and married her about the time of the second divorce of his first wife, and this was the last they heard of him until after the death of the impostor, who stole his entire estate, and sent my poor mother to the slave mart. A will, with other important documents of my father’s, was found among the papers of the deceased impostor, who left no family or relations, so far as is known. This will directed that his large estate should be equally divided, between my mother, Beatrice, Cesare and myself.

“It was Beatrice’s earnest desire to hunt us up at once, but she was restrained by the violent and unreasoning opposition of her mother. I cannot blame my amiable, but eccentric sister, for her mother had really loved my father, and had become a monomaniac, on the subject of his alliance ‘with a negro woman,’ as she believed, and the condition of her mind made it imperatively necessary that her eccentric whims should be respected and acted upon.

“The old lady died a maniac, a few weeks after my arrival in New Orleans with Beatrice and our Cousin Cesare; and life in the city became so unpleasant on

account of the military occupancy that, under the persuasion of Cesare, we determined to make our residence, for a time, near our relations in France.

“We have, here in Paris, some wealthy and influential relatives, who have introduced us into fashionable society, and I suppose I ought to be contented and happy. My sister’s health is quite delicate, and this enables me to consult my inclinations and live quite a retired life, amid the giddy whirl which surrounds us. There are two things which I do not like here. Social intercourse seems to be wanting in that plain honest sincerity to which I have been accustomed, and it seems to me I have lost, or am losing, something of that quality from my own character. My sister is violently opposed to my letting it be known that I have a trace of negro blood in my veins, and I cannot help feeling that I am a passive agent in a deception which is entirely unnecessary, to say the least.

“We shall remain here, perhaps, another year, but my heart pines for my native land, and the friends of my childhood. There is not a day, whatever my surroundings may be, that I do not visit, in thought, the dear old mansion in Virginia and its dear, kind inmates, and you and mammy, and the rude log cabins, which my fancy pictures as having been erected where “The Oaks” buildings formerly stood. How quiet and uneventful was my life at “The Oaks !” and yet I was happy ; happier than I can hope ever to be again. Then I had Cesare, and you, and mammy, and knew nothing of the bad side of human nature. Ah ! that I could have been permitted to keep all, and dream on through life !

“I wish now to speak of a matter in which you must not oppose me. Your refusal to comply with my desires

will make me very unhappy. Your honored and beloved father paid nearly three thousand dollars for my mother, brother and myself, and he and you gave us happy homes. Cesare and I felt as if we were his wards and not his slaves, and we owe you and him a pecuniary debt, as well as a debt of love and gratitude. The latter we can never fully repay—ah ! I say *we*, for I cannot even yet, fully realize that Cesare is not with you at “The Oaks”—but the former I can, since the will of my father gave me wealth for beyond my most extravagant desires. I have directed my agent in New Orleans, Mr. ———, LL. D, to send you a check for ten thousand dollars. Please send the proceeds of that check to your father ; but I prefer that he shall know nothing, except that it is in payment of an old debt forgotten by him. I have also directed Mr. ——— to honor your check on him for any amount, and if your feelings for me are such as I hope and believe, and such as are mine for you, you will not refuse to use all that you may be able to utilize of the large surplus means now to my credit in New Orleans, and which I cannot use.

“I will speak now of one whose fate is inseparably connected with your own. I have been to London to see Florence, our Florence, yours and mine. The dear child was overcome with joy at seeing me, and Dr. Hansel was exceedingly polite. Florence is very unhappy. Her mother’s health is quite delicate, and there is reason to believe that Dr. Hansel has but little regard for her peace of mind. He is scheming to marry Florence to a relative of his, and has become fanatical on the subject. I fancy that, like most people of his blood, he cannot avoid being extreme on every subject that interests him. He seeks to make Mrs. Hansel an instrument of coercion, so to speak,

to insure the success of his plans. Do not censure the dear girl, therefore, when I tell you that she is not at liberty to hold any communication with you. Filial love and duty demanded that she should make this promise, and even *I* advised it. But before I did so *I knew* that her heart was true to you, when she thought you were sleeping in an unknown grave, and that it would continue true until it ceased to throb with ‘the fever called living.’

“She wears ‘our diamond,’ as she calls it, but in order that it may not attract attention, she has employed the jewelers’ art to encase the gem in black enamel. I spoke, several pages back, of a fear that I am losing the simple sincerity of my character. Think of *me* as flattering and dazzling *Dr. Hansel* into a promise that Florence and her mother shall spend the ensuing winter in Paris as my guests! *I did it!* Ah! it is a wicked world in which barefoot virtue has to travel stony by-paths in order to outstrip booted and spurred vice upon the broad highway!”

Following the above were messages to mammy and various other persons, all of which, Mr. Conrad read carefully through, and then folding the letter, he sat in deep meditation until hearing some one approaching through the hall, he looked up to see mammy regarding curiously the letter in his hand.

“Come here, old lady!” he exclaimed, “and bask in the sun, while you tell me about this Marianne D’Elfons.”

“Lawd, Mars’ Conrad,” replied the old woman, taking the designated seat. “I is dat happy since young master read me dat letter las’ night, befo’ you come from Barrensville, I dunno what to do! I feel like marmsell has done

ris' from de dead ! Tell 'bout her ? What do you want to know ? ”

“ What she is, and what she's like ! ”

“ Well, she's a human des like we all ; an' she's a nigger too, or a slave, es you all's fokes calls it, des like me ; but for all dat she is white es any lady dares to be, an' as much of a lady as any o' dem kings and queens she's 'sociatin wid in dem furrin parts.”

“ Well, do you know that I have fallen in love with her letter ? Is she handsome ? ”

“ Han'sum ! dat ain't de word ! She's es pritty es a picter,—an' har an' eyes black es tar ! ”

“ Good ! Suppose I go to 'dem furrin' parts' and bring her back here ? ”

“ Go 'way, young marster ! ” exclaimed the old woman, evidently delighted at the suggestion. “ I don't know ef she'd have you. Dar' was a young gent'man here, es good lookin' es you is, an' rich too—scandlous rich—richest young man in de country ; har an' whiskers des like yourn ; an' he loved de groun' she walked on, and she 'fused him ! ”

“ What was the matter ? ”

“ Matter ? humph ! What you 'speck is de matter when fokes 'fuses fokes ? ”

“ Couldn't inspire her with the sublime passion ? ”

“ You kin call it any outlandish name you want to, but you'd have to talk mighty pritty ef you fared any better.”

“ Well, what became of that handsome and 'scandlous rich' fellow ? ”

“ De Yankees busted his head open for tryin' to perteck her, an' she had a sort o' way o' pertectin' herself, too.”

“ Where is he now ? ”

“ In de crazy ’sylum in ole Ferginny, dey say. Him an’ dis same Peter Dillard, dat does de blacksmifin’, knocked down an’ dragged out most a dozen o’ dem sogers down here ; an’ at Barrensville dey come mighty nigh cleanin’ out de town ’bout her, an’ cause dey kilt Fox.”

“ Was her brother a clever fellow ? ”

“ Fox ? I ain’t never seed no more cleverer man dan Fox was.”

“ Well, I shall see her one of these days, and what can you say to her in my behalf ? ”

“ I’ll tell her dat you ain’t like dem Yankees, dat fit here in Alabamer ; an’ dat ’ll give you a fair showin’ wid de balance o’ de worl’. An’ maby I’ll tell her dat I likes you nex’ arter de young marster ; but mind, I says *maby* I will ! ”



“ Mammy’s Portrait.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

TROUBLE BREWING.

"Where no hope is left, is left no fear!"

—MILTON'S PARADISE REGAINED.

*"Curs'd fate! malicious stars! you now have drain'd
Yourselves of all your poisonous influence!"*

—LEE'S MITHRIDATES.

IT has been claimed, by an apologist of the infamous Caligula, that for eighteen centuries the world has done that ancient philanthropist great injustice; and that he was nothing more nor less than a merry humorist, whose lofty sense of humor, caused him to play gigantic practical jokes. So it was, perhaps, with our modern Caligulæan philanthropists. They had no venom in their hearts! No moral dyspepsia had distilled bile into their philanthropic livers! No morbid sense of their responsibility as the vicegerents of the Almighty had caused them to weep over the sins of fallen man in the God-condemned realms beyond the confines of New England! Oh, no! They were, perhaps, only merry, fat-sided humorists, with easy consciences and good digestions—without responsibility for other people's sins, and with no sins of their own. Happy people! Merry jokers! With jibes and jests, and merry threatenings, they had driven the South out of the fair Temple which her own brain chiefly had erected, and her own blood chiefly had cemented; and with overpowering levity they had, with

merry cunning, contrived to league together all the jokers of the universe, and even the prince of jokers, to beat her back again into the Temple. But success in this only begot a craving for a still more stupendous joke. The broken and bleeding South must not be permitted to defile the Temple with her battle-stained garments. She must be hustled out, and stripped and bathed and anointed, preparatory to being decked in new habiliments. Ah, what an opportunity for a gigantic joke! Again the silvery sound of a certain "little bell" is heard. But this time it is not to consign to dungeons vile the noble souls that have failed to succumb to levity, and crush out all reverence for the traditions of their government by becoming abjectly loyal to fanaticism. No; it is to prepare the jokers, great and small, military and civil, fanatic and freebooter, for the crowning joke of the age—"Reconstruction!" And it said to those who read its message aright—and the message was passed from chief to subordinate, from representative to rabble—"Come, ye jackalls, ye vultures—all ye scavengers of the earth—and work your will before we hide the dainty form, now exhausted and bleeding, in the gorgeous robes of barbarism, and make her the court jester for the nation!"

Fortunate was it for the interests of American civilization and free constitutional government, that while knaves and fools plotted, fools and knaves executed, and all laughed, there was a conservative, patriotic and brain-endowed element at the North, strenuously laboring for recognition and influence amongst a generation of grinning "Merry Andrews." Though this long-smothered element was destined not to assume the reins of power, the fear of losing the loaves and fishes of office, caused the merry plotters to show a servile truckling to moderate counsels.

The former element desired to say to the South—“Unhappy sister, come back without dishonor! We have overwhelmed you, but your honor is untarnished, and it is a guaranty more fully to be trusted than would be the servile pledges of a different people, that you will bow with candid submission to the decision of that arbitration, which, in the present condition of the world’s civilization, all must recognize as final!” This was honor speaking to honor; chivalry greeting chivalry. But the other element, judging all things by its own low standard, regarded nothing of any value but penal bonds, mortgage deeds, or cash in hand. With them magnanimity seemed a comfortless, insipid sort of thing, while revenge possessed a sweet and aromatic flavor.

It is with peoples in bulk as with individuals, in their personal peculiarities. The brave honor a brave adversary, while the cowardly despise the skill and daring that well-nigh overcame greatly superior physical force.

So the wise and patriotic planned; knaves and fools shook their heads and laughed. Then knaves and fools plotted, wise men shook their heads and still the jokers laughed and sent fools on errands. We will let one of these latter speak:

“It was proposed that the states that had been in the infested region should be quietly left to molder in the grave of rebellion—the bed they had themselves prepared; that the region they once embraced should be divided up into territories, without regard to former statal lines, and so remain for a score of years under national control—but without power to mold or fashion the national legislation—until time should naturally and thoroughly have healed the breaches of the past [patched the army trowsers!], till commerce had become re-established, and the crude

ideas of the present had been clarified by the light of experience."

What a gigantic and delicious joke would this have been ! The dainty maiden to be kept bound and naked for a score or two of years ! How the jackalls, the vultures, all the scavengers of the earth, would revel in good times and royal fun, while Father Time should be re-vamping the breeches of the past ! What scores of thousands of offices to be filled by the truly loyal during the scores of years that were to be stretched into centuries, while Father Time nodded over his wofully extended job And what good fat offices, too, could they all be made, with pickings and perquisites, from constable of a township to governor of a satrapy ! But alas for the hungry and expectant scavengers ! The honest hearts that had been fired by the flame of battle had begun to cool. The statesmanship that had lost its head, when the danger of losing the chief contributors to its material prosperity had loomed up in the political horizon, was recovering from its *mania-a-potu*. It was threatening to deprive hungry maws of the rich pap which was already feeding their vampirism, and it forced them to take counsel of their fears. And after they and their fears had held solemn conclave the candid fool gives the result :

"The President and his supporters were going to the country on his plan [a certain degree of justice and magnanimity]. When the Congress threatened impeachment, he sought for justification at the ballot-box. Some plan must be devised to meet him. What should it be ? The logic which carries elections answered, 'One on which all who are opposed to the presidential plan in the North can be induced to unite.' From this womb of party necessity and political insincerity, came forth this abor-

tion, or, rather this monster, doomed to parricide in the hour of its birth.”

* * * * *

“They were giving the power of the re-organized subordinate republics into the hands of a race unskilled in public affairs, poor to a degree hardly to be matched in the civilized world, and so ignorant that not five out of a hundred could read their own ballots. * * * Against them were to be pitted the wealth, the intelligence, the organizing skill, the pride and the hate [?] of a people whom it had taken four years to conquer in open fight, when their enemies outnumbered them three to one. * * * Not content with this, they went further, and, by erecting the rebellious territory into self-regulating and sovereign states, they abandoned these parties, like cocks in a pit, to fight out the question of predominance without the possibility of national interference ! It was cheap patriotism, cheap philanthropy.” *

It was, indeed, very cheap *patriotism*—no doubt it will feel cheap to the remotest ages of times—to leave the poor, ignorant African, into whose “hands they were giving the power of the reorganized, subordinate republics,” to govern his territory and rule “without the possibility of national interference,” those intelligent, skilled, proud and *hateful* Caucasians, who had shown a three to one superiority over other Caucasians—even themselves ! It was dirt-cheap philanthropy—it ought to die of a cheap ague—to close the door of the arena before being assured, “beyond the possibility of a peradventure,” that every poor little lion would be able to overcome and devour his Christian ! Such cheap patriotism and philanthropy was a crime against New England Puritanism, was a sin

* These extracts are from “A Fool’s Errand.” Pages 118–20.

against John Brown's tramping soul, and spoiled the best part of a joke, compared with which the burning of witches was amusement fit only for sucking babes !

But the deed was done. The cocks were "in the pit to fight out the question of predominance," but *not* "without the possibility of interference" in favor of the black dung-hill, and not without a high resolve to make him the "cock of the walk."

"Mars' Chyarles," said Dick, one sultry afternoon, stopping his plough as he met the young master in the field, where a small squad of hands were engaged in 'laying-by' cotton that had been well cultivated and promised a bountiful yield, but adjoining which were hundreds of acres which had been 'turned out,' and on which the pale and sickly stalks, with a few sad abortions in the direction of blossoms and bolls, were overtopped by weeds six or eight feet high, "dar's gwine to be trubble in dis country befo' long."

We will remark, *par parenthesis*, that we have passed over a comparatively uneventful period in the history of our hero. The political reader has already observed this, and he will not care to witness the cruel pranks of the bull-baiter while waiting for the stirring events of the arena. The negro, unlike some sub-races or clans, so to name them, of the Caucasian family, is slow to think, and, when not goaded by passion, is slow to act. He had been slow to learn the lesson of Christianity and civilization, and was not disposed to unlearn it in a few months, if at all. His natural instinct, after having been refined by Christianity, was a love for all of God's human creatures, no matter of what race, class or condition, and particularly for those who had elevated and been kind to him. It took time to make him believe that the Southern white

people had never shown anything but the most unjustifiable wrong and outrage toward his race, and that the Puritans of New England were the only white friends he had upon the globe. It took time to fire his heart against his old friends, but it has been fired, and is burning slowly. Like the black mound of the charcoal-burner, it has been fired by a stealthy hand during the dark hours of a moonless night,* and the ascending smoke tells of a glow within. Shall the woodsmen suffer it to burst out and destroy itself and all around, or shall they stand by to smother any outbursting flame, and to keep the fierce heat within the rude crucible until all gross material within shall have been purged and purified?

Mr. Stewart's countenance assumed a very dejected expression as he replied :

“ In the name of pity, Dick, haven't we enough trouble already ? ”

“ Yes, sar, trouble 'nuff, sich es it is. Here's 'bout three-thirds o' de cot'n turned out 'cause dem dat planted it is done made up der min's to live widout work by runnin' roun' to de League meetins, musters, singin' skools an' sich, an' thievin', an' robin', an' lyin', and bearin' false witness an' de like ; but de trouble I's talkin' 'bout is fightin' trubble.”

“ Well ; things can't get much worse than they are already. That is one consolation we have ; but what is the trouble ? ”

“ You know dat you an' Mars' Conrad gin mos' all de lumber to build Bethel camp-ground church, and dat Br'er Peter done more dan any dozen niggers, workin' on it an' hirin' work.”

* Negro charcoal burners believe that a kiln so fired will be sure to “ luck well.”

“ Yes.”

“ Well, dem niggers dat has done quit workin’ an’ says de worl’ owes ’em a livin’, says dat dey is gwine to turn me an’ Br’er Peter, an’ all dem dat don’t go to de League meetins an’ de every-day singin’ skools, out ’n de church.”

“ What for ? ”

“ Dey say we’s white fokeses niggers, an’ is done turned agin our color.”

“ Well, you can serve your Maker without having your name on a church book.”

“ But dey say, dat turnin’ out means dat we sha’n’t go to de church dat we built, and sha’n’t sociate wid nobody but white fokes ; an’ if we goes to de meetin’ nex’ Sunday, dey is gwine to pitch us out’n de winders ; an’ all hans says dey’s gwine dar if day lives ’till Sunday ; an’ Br’er Peter says, if he goes out o’ de winder, he’ll be apt to leave a fo’ hoss wagin-load o’ dead niggers inside de house.”

“ Why are they so bitter against Peter ? ”

“ Dey’s bitter agin all de niggers dat goes to de white fokes for edvice. I means our sort o’ white fokes—dey counts ’tother sort es good es niggers. But dey’s pertickler mad wid Br’er Peter, cause he’s done bought an’ paid for ten acres o’ lan’. Dey says dis country belongs to de niggers, an’ dat every one has got to have forty acres an’ a mule, an’ a heap of ’em is done picked out de lan’ an’ de mule. Dar’s a big quarrelin’ goin’ on bout who is gwine to have dat pacin’ mule o’ ourn. Yah, yah, yah ! An’ dey’s mad wid me an’ Br’er Peter bofe, ’cause his wife cooks for her ole mistis, an’ I ’lows Jane to cook for Miss Clare, her ole skoolmate, dat bofe lived at de ’Theneum together.”

“As Peter has bought ten acres, I suppose they will allow him only thirty more?”

“No, sah; not a foot! Dey says dat dem dat buys lan’, an’ even dem dat works for de white fokes, will have to look to *dem* for lan’ an’ mules. Dat Wheelless, an’ dem ole gals at de ‘mission skool,’ es dey calls it at Bethel, is mad wid everybody dat does anything but run roun’ to de League meetins and de singin’ skools. Dey’s mighty mad wid you an’ Mars’ Conrad, too.”

“What have they against us?”

“Dey says you’s too independent by half; an’ dat you’ll git into trouble ef you don’t quit talkin’ agin de League an’ de singin’ skools.”

“We don’t talk against them, except to advise the negroes that they can put their time and nickels to better use, than chanting the glorification of New England and the Puritan Fathers.”

“Dats what’s de matter! You’d better talk agin John Brown, (or even de Saviour hisself) dan ’gin dem Purytin dadies. Dat makes ’em fightin’ mad; an’ dey says you an’ him is de rebelist rebels in de whole lan’.”

“Don’t they know that Conrad fought on the Union side?”

“Dey says dat’s all a lie you an’ him made up. Dem corkscrew ole gals says dat; ef it was a nigger, me an’ Br’er Peter’d mash his mouf! I tole ’em I had seen Mars’ Conrad myself, at de head of more’n a thousan’ Union sogers, an’ every one of ’em a gent’man, an’ dey said I was de biggest liar dat ever hopped. I didn’t say much, cause you know Mars’ Conrd tole me to let ’em think he was a rebel.”

“Is there any serious danger of trouble at the church on Sunday?”

“Des es sure es de sun rises dat day, we’s gwine to dat church. Dars ’bout a dozen on our side, an’ ef dey tries to put us out, dar’s gwine to be more niggers kilt dan was slewed endurin’ o’ de war!”

“Have you been behaving yourselves at the church and complying with the rules?”

“Yes, sar; We pays our ten cents every time we goes, an’ ef de ’sponses an’ things don’t suit us, we keeps our mouths shot in de meetin’ ’ouse.”

“Do the teachers know there is going to be trouble?”

“Dey knows dat de tothers says dey is gwine to put us out de ’ouse; but I don’t know as dey knows we ain’t de sort dat ain’t put out easy. Dey sides wid tothers, an’ is always sassyin’ an’ talkin’ at us bout stickin’ to de flesh pots o’ Egypt, an’ not follerin’ arter Moses an’ de Profits.”

“Whom, or what do they present as Moses and the Prophets?”

“I don’t ’zackly know, sar. Dey looks like—ef dey was to put on britches—dey might be Moses an’ Aaron an’ Duteronomy, an’ all dem ole fellers; an’ I speck de five cents on week days an’ ten cents on Sundays is de profits.”

“Do as many attend as in the spring, when Conrad and I went over there?”

“A heap more! I speck dey’ll average nigh a hundred on week days, an’ some Sundays dar’s over a thousand—or mighty nigh it, anyhow.”

“Do they have preaching every Sunday?”

“Well, dat Wheeless talks bout Pharo’ an’ de white fokes persecutin’ de niggers an’ de chil’n o’ Israel, an’ tells bout de Red Sea o’ water dat ’stroyed Pharo’, an’ de Red Sea o’ blood dat ought to ’stroy de white fokes, an’

maby will one o' dese days ; an' dey calls dat preachin'. Ef dat Wheeless ain't dar, dem ole gals tells bout how Mars' Ginerall Grant an' Mars' Ginerall Washington an' de tother Purytins, whipped de British an' de Rebels, an' set all de niggers free all over creation, an' den dey caps it all off wid 'ligious talk bout John Brown an' de Saviour, an' dey calls dat 'lectioneerin', or somethin' like dat."

"Dick," said the young master, seriously, "you and Peter, and the others on your side, have been prompted by curiosity and a desire to meet the crowd in going to Bethel. Only curiosity has taken you there, and as your attendance is likely to create a disturbance, I advise you all to stay away."

"It's too late, Mars' Chyarles ! Br'er Peter is done hilt up his han' an' swared dat he's gwine to go to dat church an' die dar if it comes to dat ; an' we has done swared dat we'll stan' by him es long es dar's a pea in de dish !"

"Next Sunday ?"

"Yes, sar ; day arter to-morrow."

"At what hour ?"

"Well, de singin' skool begins at nine o'clock an' holds till 'leven, an' den dey has dar sort o' preachin' or 'lectioneerin'."

"Conrad and I will ride over there on Sunday at nine o'clock, and will undertake to keep the peace, if you and the others will agree to stay away till the regular hour—eleven o'clock."

"You'd better not go, Mars' Chyarles ! You don't know how imperdent an' sassy dem ole gals does talk ! You'd git mad es a March har' !"

"Oh, I hope not," said the young man, with a laugh, "I am not given to losing my temper, am I ?"

"No, sar; but does you know dat ef a row was kicked up, you an' Mars' Conrad would be in a heap more danger dan me an' Br'er Peter? You all is Pharo' an' de char-yots, an' we is only de lost sheep o' Israel, 'cordin' to dar way o' figurein' it."

"But we don't intend that a row shall be 'kicked up.' You all have made a foolish oath, and we must help you out of the scrape. I want you to go over and tell Peter that I want to see him this evening."

"Mars' Chyarles," said Dick, looking at the young man, earnestly, "is you 'terminated to go, hit or miss, an' git mixed up in a nigger's row?"

"I shall go, but there must be no row. If once started, who knows where it may end? The whole country is like a powder magazine, and good people had better submit to a little wrong than fight with fire-brands. You and Peter have been imprudent, but as there is no going back from your positions, which ordinarily would be perfectly proper, we must try diplomacy and keep passion in subjection."



One of "de lost sheep o' Israel."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MISSION SCHOOL—A NEW TEACHER.

*"Of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of
A bramble bush gather they grapes."*

—GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

*"Peace fled the neighborhoods in which she made
Her haunts."—POLLOCK.*

ON the following Sabbath the two masters of "The Oaks," rode over to Bethel church at an early hour. The building was a broad and wide-spreading affair, constructed of rough planks, but with neat doors and windows, and intended to accommodate very large congregations during the Methodist camp-meetings and the Baptist associations. Previous to the war the colored people of these two denominations, worshiped in the old building which the Turchin "fire-bugs" had destroyed. The site belonged to the two denominations jointly, but as all denominations, and persons belonging to no denomination, had assisted in erecting the new building, it was generally considered a free church, until, by some legerdemain, the Northern Methodists, a church having no affiliation with, or sympathy in the work of the Methodist Church South, or of any Southern Church, obtained or assumed exclusive control of it.

The neighborhood had formerly been very wealthy, and was still densely populated by colored people, many of

whom, refusing to labor or acknowledge dependence on the white people, had moved into the dilapidated log cabins of the camp-ground, which had not been destroyed during the war. A "mission-house" had been erected by these, and by the aid of money sent from the North; and several females from Massachusetts had installed themselves as "teachers" to the multitudes who, in addition to those resident there, flocked daily from all the plantations within the radius of five or six miles.

For many months the minds of the negroes had been in a ferment. They were made to believe that they only needed a little "book learnin'" to make them the superiors of the white people of the South. This idea was received with great distrust at first, but they were surrounded on all sides by marvelous things; things which they could not comprehend or account for, and they finally adopted the bewildering belief that the promised time had come when the first should be last; and *vice versa*. There were many things, beside the daily talks of the teachers, to confirm them in this belief. The ability of the most worthless negro in the country to have a gentleman arrested, and perhaps imprisoned, on the most improbable and silly charges, was a new revelation; and the fact that money and property could be taken from him simply by contriving to get the shadow of a claim, and then by producing more witnesses than he could command, was calculated to strengthen their belief in the oracular wisdom of their teachers, and to open to their astonished visions the great possibilities of the future. Many had already come to believe that the white people had but few rights, and those only of person, which they were bound to respect; and these were restrained only by a fear of such punishment as might be inflicted without the sanction of

proper authority. They knew that no punishment would be inflicted on themselves, by the authorities of the Freedman's Bureau, so long as they could match an oath with an oath, for had not the Bureau officials advertised to all the people that the statement of a “ward of the Nation” would, and should, be credited, in preference to the contradicting statement of a rebel ex-slaveholder? And then, as to procuring witnesses, was not every member of the Union League bound by a solemn oath to “stand up to his color,” and was not this construed to mean, among other things, that any “brother” had a right to command the services of all the others as witnesses; and that no “brother” could swear against a “brother” under any circumstances?

On arriving at the camp-ground Mr. Stewart dismounted and went immediately to the mission-house. For some reason Mr. Conrad had chosen to make no acquaintances among the Northern adventurers who had come into the country, or even to make himself known to the Bureau officials at Barrensville, and he consequently put Mr. Stewart forward on this, as on other occasions. While Mr. Stewart was in the mission-house, the latter improved the opportunity to have a pleasant talk with the sixty or more negroes, who had already arrived. He was soon in earnest conversation with an intelligent and amiable looking old man, who listened with every mark of respect, to the words of the young man, which were uttered in a loud tone of voice, evidently with a desire that all should hear. Some uttered exclamations of “Dat's so!” “He's talkin' de blessed troof!” etc., while the majority stood mute, or silently shook their heads. Finally, one of the latter said to the old man, who was holding his *ante bellum* white beaver in his hand:

“Uncle Ben, put on your hat, you old fool!”

The old man turned instantly upon the young buck, and exclaimed, angrily :

“Hold your jaw, you impudent young nigger! De young gent’man has got his hat off, an’ ‘I ain’t nigger enough to let anybody outdo me in perliteness!”

This vehement and sarcastic reply produced laughter and applause at the young buck’s expense, which was raised to a shout, as the old man added :

“A gent’man always treats a gent’man like a gent’man, but a young puppy always tries to be a bigger dog dan he is!”

“Well, old gentleman,” said Mr. Conrad, unable to restrain his laughter at the old man’s indignant ire, but shaking him heartily by the hand, “the young fellow’s impertinence has served as the best possible introduction ; and I am proud of the privilege of shaking hands with a gentleman of nature’s own make. I want to know you better, and you must come and see me at ‘The Oaks.’”

At this moment the teachers were seen coming from the mission-house, and escorted by Mr. Stewart. There was a rush toward the house to procure good seats, as already several hundred persons were on the ground, and fresh squads were coming in rapidly. Mr. Conrad accompanied the old man to the door, and then waited to have a hurried consultation with Mr. Stewart.

“What are they like?” he asked of that young man, after the teachers had filed in.

“Not like ladies.”

“How did they receive you?”

“Civilly ; gave me a seat, and, after I had stated my business, retired for consultation.”

“What was the result?”

“They will not ‘allow’ me to address their ‘pupils,’ but will not object to our witnessing the exercises if we will ‘deport ourselves in a becoming manner,’ as they ‘require all to do.’ ”

These “laborers in the moral vineyard” were sent forward, it was said, by various religious and philanthropic societies, backed by the Freedmen’s Bureau. Before the war, these societies had sent only men; one of whom had been hanged in Virginia, after committing murder, and numbers of whom had been “beaten with stripes” for inciting to riot and insurrection in various parts of the South. But now, that they were backed by the Freedmen’s Bureau, which represented the dignity and power of the government, it was thought, perhaps, that the fierce persecutors of former “missionaries” would be prompted by chivalry—and bayonets—to view more rationally the blessed work, if performed by gentle woman—that class of the gentle sex who repudiate Scott’s slander that they are “uncertain, coy and hard to please.”

Once when seven conscientious men, with eight others, formed a commission to decide a matter of very grave import (by the by, why should sarcastic Fate have decreed that the “best *people* the world ever knew” should be doomed to celebrate their centennial by one of the most shameless frauds the world ever saw?), it was demonstrated that the human mind, even in positions of honor and trust the most exalted, cannot be trusted to wrestle with matters upon which self-interest or vested prejudices have any bearing. For this reason, and, lest we should show the bias of the immortal chief justice who was Number Eight on one side of that renowned commission, we prefer that a Caligulæan philanthropist, one who aided and abetted, shall describe the school and teachers

which the young masters of "The Oaks" went to visit ; and also give his ideas of civilization, and the standard by which religious duties and obligations should be measured. He says :

"To them thronged with wondrous eagerness the old and the young alike of the recently emancipated race. * * * In it [the school building] seven ladies, who had come from far Northern homes, filled with the genuine spirit of the missionary, and, no doubt, thinking themselves endowed with the spirit of that Redeemer who taught publicans in the market, or in the desert, despite the frowns of the Pharisees, held sway. These seven fair, pure-hearted Northern girls taught within its walls each day, and often at night, six hundred and more of the race which had, just now, its first chance at the tree of knowledge since our common mother persisted in eating the mystic apple. They no doubt thought they were doing God's service, and wondered why the earnest Christians who dwelt about them should regard the inhabitants of the mission-house with such open aversion and apparent hate. It must have seemed strange to these fresh young believers to see the seats in the church in front and rear of where they sat upon the Sabbath, vacated by the most devout of God's people in ———. They wondered at it for a time, and then blamed the good people of ———, and thought ill of their religion, when it was not the good people who were at fault, nor their religion, but only the civilization of which they were the outcome. There never was a kindlier or more hospitable, or more religious people on the footstool than those of ———, only they were kind according to *their notions*, as everybody else is ; hospitable according to custom, like the rest of the world ; and religious according to education and tradition, as are

other people ; and the disjointure of opinion between them and Yankee schoolmarms was all because the latter wanted to measure them by Northern ideas of these virtues, instead of accepting those they found there. Sometimes they wrote indignant letters to their friends at home ; but it was fortunate that the greater part of the evil things said of them by the neighboring Christians never came to their knowledge, and their hearts were too pure to comprehend the foul innuendoes which floated by them. So they went on, teaching as they had been taught, those who had been all their lives thitherto untaught ; and the others went on hating and defaming them (as they were hated and defamed [?]), because such a course was counter to their traditions, and those who did it were their hereditary enemies.* And both, no doubt, felt that they were doing God's service with their might.” †

On entering the building, the young men walked the full length of the aisle and were offered seats by the old men in the “amen corner,” which were accepted with thanks. The teachers, who appeared to range in age from the dawn of the hopeless period of spinster-hood to the period of flat and angular forms and sour tempers, sat upon the broad platform, from which the movable pulpit had been banished to a corner of the building. One was reading a chapter from the Old Testament, describing a terrible slaughter inflicted by the children of Israel upon some unfortunate clan whose lands they desired to possess ; which, being concluded, a prayer was offered, reminding

* Why should those officious interlopers have felt themselves to be hereditary enemies of the white people ? Alas ! there is no enmity so unreasonable and yet so bitter as that which is excited by a sense of having taken a mean advantage of an honorable adversary !

† Taken from “A Fool's Errand.” Pages 103-5.

the Father of his promises and duties, by another, and then the school was declared open. One of them arose, and, taking a pair of steel-rimmed glasses from her nose, addressed the vast assemblage in a voice which, but for the nasal twang peculiar to New England Puritans, would have been rather pleasant than otherwise.

“My friends,” she said, “we have two visitors to-day who are not in sympathy with us, but are prompted by motives of curiosity—we will hope by no worse motive—to visit our school and witness our exercises. We have nothing to conceal, and as these visitors will doubtless deport themselves properly, I desire that they shall be treated with respect.

“It has been reported to these visitors, that certain colored people who have been in the habit of attending our exercises occasionally, have been threatened with expulsion from this building, because they have become ‘white folks’ niggers,’ whatever that may be, and because they have withdrawn from the loyal league, and do not join in other things that please and interest you. I hope there will be no disturbance in this church. This is a free country now—as free as my own native Massachusetts—and all are free alike. If there are black sheep in our flock, and I may say I fear—indeed, I know there are; even they——”

“We’s all black, ole mistis!” shouted a densely black woman, who doubtless thought some allusion was made to herself, and who had been enviously admiring some mulatto girls on the bench in front of herself. “Dese yaller gals, wid all dar ribbins an’ feathers, is es black sheep es anybody!”

“Silence!” commanded the old lady, angrily. “I say if there are unworthy members here, they are free too;

no less free than you all are, and I hope they will not be molested in the church, so long as they deport themselves in a seemly manner. We will begin, as usual, with the first chant.”

Then, for more than an hour, there was that promiscuous chanting, which gave these schools, among the negroes, the name of “singing schools.” Everything was chanted from the emancipation proclamation to a spelling lesson; or a geography lesson, locating Boston in the centre of the universe, and crediting it with being a perennial fount from which flows only blessings for all the human family. There was but little in the catechism which they chanted to remind the negroes of the simple one which they had repeated in childhood. It was evidently gotten up for the benefit of the negroes, to teach chiefly, that the ‘Rebels’ were responsible for the sin of slavery and for all the outrages and bloodshed of the war; that John Brown was a saint and a martyr, and that the teachers, loyal league emissaries, freedman’s bureau agents, missionaries, etc., were only humble followers of his, who were ready, if need be, to sacrifice their lives, as he had done, for their good. After something over an hour of chanting, there was another short prayer, and the principal announced that, as “Brother Wheelless had been unexpectedly called to a distant part of the county,” there would be no sermon.

“We will sing,” she added, “the John Brown chant, and have a short lecture from Sister Seward, on the duties of the hour.”

“Madam,” said Mr. Stewart, rising to his feet, and speaking deferentially, “will you permit me to ask that they be allowed to sing, instead of the chant suggested, some old familiar hymn—something to which they have been accustomed, and which will create a devotional feel-

ing on this holy Sabbath day? I would suggest ‘Jesus, lover of my soul.’”

“We have taught them,” replied the principal, “to sing new tunes and chants. We prefer that they shall have nothing to remind them of their past degradation. Of course, I could have no other objection to the hymn you suggest, which is one of Wesley’s most inspired and inspiring compositions. We will sing the chant.”

The entire assembly joined in the singing, but without the spirit which large congregations of negroes usually engage in such exercises. As soon as the last note was sounded, Mr. Conrad addressed the principal:

“Madam,” he said, speaking earnestly and rapidly, “will you allow me to speak a few words to the people—only a few words, and for their good only? I was a soldier in the Union army, from the summer of sixty-one to the last day at Appomattox. If the credit of freeing the slaves belongs to the Union armies, as it certainly does, I claim to have entitled myself to one man’s full share of that credit. The colored people have not a truer friend from the North than I am. I am so true a friend that it grieves me to see them being misled by flattery; and I wish only to remind them that they have faults and failings like the balance of mankind; and that some of those faults and failings may be envy, hatred and malice, which I do not think belong naturally to their characters in their present——”

“Are you making a speech, sir,” asked the principal, angrily, “or asking permission to do so?”

“I am only speaking a few words, with your permission, I hope. There is a knowledge which I am lead to believe this congregation——”

“I must ask you to desist, sir!” said the old lady,

excitedly. “This is our mission, and we propose to teach these people as we think best for *their* good. If the best interests of yourselves and others conflict with *theirs*, I can only regret that it is so; and I shall not shirk my solemn duty on that account.”

“But there is no conflict, madam! What is for the real good of one class of society cannot fail to reflect a benefit upon society generally. The object which brought me here to-day was to lend a helping hand toward keeping the peace; and we had hoped you would give us your assistance in that——”

“You came to make a speech, sir,” interrupted the old lady, sarcastically, “and it seems you mean to do so whether I consent or no!”

“I came to act the part of a peacemaker, and I do desire to say to this congre——”

“We desire no speech, sir! and if we wished to hear an oration, we should prefer to select the orator.”

“Pardon me, madam, but I am ——”

“Silence, sir!” exclaimed the old lady, angrily and authoritatively. “If you persist I shall ——”

“Put him out!” was shouted from a far corner of the building.

“Shet your fool mouf, you sassy young nigger,” exclaimed a voice close by the would-be law breaker. But immediately another voice, on the opposite side of the house, echoed the cry:

“Put him out!” This too was reproved by some one near by, but it caused a buzz in that part of the building.

“Put him out!” shouted a brawny young fellow, springing upon a bench in the lower part of the house.

This started a storm of cries, which ran over all the lower part of the house and created much commotion.

“Put him out, d—n him ! Squelch the old rebel. Put him out !”

“He’s a Yankee whelp—smash de ’ceitful Yankee dat has done gone back on his—on our color !” etc., etc.

All the lower portion of the house was immediately thrown into confusion, and there seemed to be a disposition to make a rush upon the two white men in the front, who had mounted the benches, and were close observers of every movement, while the frightened females screamed themselves hoarse commanding “order.” Women screamed and clung to the collars or coat-skirts of their husbands or brothers, and old men wrestled with their sons.

“Let me go !” shouted one ; “I’s gwine to stand up for de boss o’ ‘De Oaks !’”

In an instant he fell senseless from a blow dealt him in the face, and the next moment the assailant fell across him, and so it went until perhaps a dozen were down. The old people in the “solemn corner” around the two white men, left their seats and crowded upon the platform with the teachers. But their places were instantly filled. Through the window at the back of the benches sprang a dozen or more dusky and stalwart forms, with glaring eyes and dilated nostrils, and placed themselves by the side of the white men. This sudden apparition of dusky warriors, well armed with heavy walking sticks of green hickory, coming to back the two young men whose coolness, under the circumstances, had already half demoralized the mob, caused the hesitating young rabble to come to a sudden standstill, and to look helplessly around as if in search of a leader. Peter Dillard, seeing that the decisive moment had arrived, and that a bloodless victory was within his grasp, threw his stick out of the window, and shouted :

“Go back to your seats, boys! Your mammies is ‘shamed ‘of you! My brethren we will sing, ‘Jesus lover of my soul.’”

He instantly raised the hymn, throwing the full power of his strong voice into each note, and his own party, with a few scattering voices here and there over the house, immediately joined in. Before the first stanza was finished, nearly all had given in to the influence of the music and sentiment, as Peter knew, from experience, would be the case if he could once get that favorite hymn fairly started. Ah! how like old times sounded that familiar hymn in the full chorus of strong voices! How it reminded all of good old Brother Elliott, who was beloved by every colored individual present, during his life, and whose memory was still revered by them! As the full volume of the ancient, sad and solemn melody “shook the air,” and rolled up in a vast flood to the wide-spreading span of rough clap-boards, seeming to threaten to burst all bounds and deluge the forest with music, the assembly underwent a change which seemed singular and unaccountable to the few people of Northern birth who witnessed it. Under the influence of that prime favorite of all the hymns formerly sung by them, the simple faith of the impressionable children of nature, as it had been taught to them in childhood at the knee of some good old mammy, or standing in a semi-circle in front of some kind old mistress, returned to them in all its pristine force, and they forgot for the moment all but the simple fact that the meek and lowly Jesus of Nazareth died for mankind, and enjoined that they should love one another. Men who but a few moments before had struggled with each other, clasped hands in token of reconciliation, women threw their arms around one another and wept, and old

men went from seat to seat shaking hands with all, while tears coursed down their sable cheeks.

As soon as the last note was sounded, Mr. Conrad sprang upon a bench and exclaimed :

“My friends, I asked of another permission to address you; now I ask *you* if you will permit me to say a few words about Him who died for us all?”

“Speak! speak! speak!” was shouted from every part of the house, and the teachers arose as if to leave the building.

“Madam,” said Mr. Conrad, addressing the principal, “I hope you will remain. I have but little to say and shall detain you but a few moments. My friends,” he added, turning to the vast audience, “it was very evident to me, while you were offering that grand musical prayer, that you were not repeating empty, unmeaning words, but that your hearts were speaking earnestly and in good faith to Him who died for all the children of Adam—for me as well as for you, and for those toward whom you may feel angered as well as for your friends. He did not die for one race, or one class, or one condition of men, but for all mankind; and in him all men are brothers. From the fair Caucasian Mountains to the burning sands of Africa; from the utmost limits of the East to the farthest stretch of the West, those who believe on Him, and act up to their belief, are brothers, and as brothers He commands us to love one another. Love is the great example which His life on earth gave us. Love thy neighbor as thyself is the commandment, and is the measure which we should strive to fill, for it is the one by which we shall surely be measured hereafter. It is, alas! too often the case that envy, hatred and malice, fill hearts which honestly believe they are doing His holy work; that pride

and all uncharitableness actuate persons who believe they are laboring in His cause ; and while they are singing peans to themselves, the angels in heaven are weeping over the results of their work.

“ In your beautiful hymn you sang :

‘ Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
‘ Till the storm of life be past !’

and I want to caution you, my friends, against your own evil passions and misdirected zeal which will make, as is the general experience of life, the worst part of the storm from which you pray to be hidden. Do not suffer your hearts to be fired against any of God’s creatures. If you can bear malice in your hearts ; if you can wish evil to your neighbor ; if you can desire to do injury to any of God’s creatures, then that beautiful prayer is an impious blasphemy upon your lips.

“ You have been taught that it is a religious duty incumbent on you to ‘ stand up for your blood and color ’ right or wrong, and to regard with suspicion, distrust and aversion, those of your own race who do not accept this teaching. This lesson has been given you, not by teachers of your own blood and color, but of mine. If that could be accepted as a religious duty, is it not as incumbent on the white man as on the black ? Believe me, if your teaching shall produce a conflict of races, you will find it so ! The traitors, the Iscariots of my race, may fire your hearts and direct you on the road to ruin, but if you follow it, woe to you ! Blood is thicker than water ! Brothers may quarrel and raise armies to slaughter each other, but woe to the alien who, presuming upon their supposed hatred, steps in to put his foot upon the neck of the fallen one ! If you suffer your untutored minds to be goaded to phrenzy,

beware of the consequences ! The true people of the North, those whose services in the army gave the government the power to emancipate you, and without whose services the proclamation of emancipation would have been a ridiculous farce, will never raise a finger to make you, what God never intended you to be, rulers over people of their own blood. No ! believe me, they will stand aloof, and having lost all sympathy for you on account of the evil passions which you evince under the influence of evil teaching, they will laugh at the calamity which you may bring upon yourselves ! We desire to see you contented and happy. You have now an opportunity to prove that you can govern yourselves and can preserve the civilization which has been given you. If you accomplish this, you will accomplish all that can be reasonably expected of you by those who know the history of your race. Can you and will you do it, despite all the evil influences which now are, or may hereafter be brought to bear on you ? Let us hope so !

“ In this vast assemblage there are but two persons who ever raised an arm to give the government the power to free you from slavery. One of these is this stalwart hero,” laying his hand upon Peter Dillard’s arm. “ While he was fighting to free you, do you suppose he anticipated being made a slave to your caprices ? By no means ! You all know how this house was built. He did more than any dozen of you to secure its erection, and his white friends contributed all of the necessary means and money. He claims the right to attend here upon the same terms and conditions that may be imposed upon others. You have no right to deny him this privilege ; and it is proper that it should be fully understood that he, and others who have fallen under the displeasure of

some of you, intend to exercise their rights in this particular. I have tried to dissuade them, but I cannot shake their determination, nor can I censure the honest indignation which they feel at the course that has been pursued toward them. I hope your teachers will join me in the effort to keep the peace. We must all try to exercise forbearance and Christian charity. Let us all lay aside arrogant selfishness as far as possible, and try to imitate the example of Him who, though the Ruler of the universe, rebuked the pride of power and taught meekness and humility. I thank you, my friends, for your polite attention.”

As the young man turned and bowed to the ladies as a sort of mute apology for having been compelled to turn his back upon them while speaking, there was a general clapping of hands, and a cry of “Peter Dillard! Peter Dillard! Speech! Speech!”

Peter arose in some confusion and said :

“My fren’s, dar’s but one sort o’ agyment I knows much about, an’ dat’s de one I flung out’n de winder ; an’ de boss has done made me ’shamed dat I thought ’bout usin’ dat. Niggers min’s ain’t like white fokes min’s. I has done found dat out. Ef white fokes gits into a tight place dey fin’s a way to git out widout no big rumpus, but dey carries de pint all de same. Ef a nigger gits into a tight place he don’t know but two ways out. One is back out, an’ tother is fight out. De fust is de Christon’s duty, I reckon, but it is de most unsatisfyinest Christon duty dat I ever tried my hand on. But mayby dat is because I lets de ole nigger dat’s in me git too big for his britches. We all has to fite de ole Adam dat’s in us, an maby de niggers’ ole Adam is bigger an’ tuffer dan de white fokses. You all know dat he is mighty big an’ tuff, but I’s gwine to put up a job on him. I’s gwine to come

to dis church, no matter who's agin it ; but I ain't gwine to bring no hickory stick argyment ; an' ef anybody smites me on one cheek I's gwine to come in here an' pray for him, rememberin' what de Blessed One said 'bout 'resent ye not evil.' An' I hopes——”

“I think this desecration of the Sabbath,” said the principal, arising and going to the front of the platform, “has gone quite far enough. You are dismissed. Sir,” she added, turning to Mr. Conrad ; “I hope you are satisfied with the manner in which you have carried your point ! I shall report you and that man to the Freedman's Bureau for disturbing our Sabbath devotions, and trying to neutralize the good work we are doing here.”

“Madam,” replied Mr. Conrad, politely, “if I have said things that offend you I regret very deeply the necessity. As regards your threat, I too could make a report ; for I flatter myself that I could exercise some influence with the Head of the Administration.”

“And what would your report to the ‘Head of the Administration’ avail, pray ?” asked the woman, contemptuously. “The government has no more authority over us, or our affairs, than have you, or the rebels whom you are aiding and abetting.”

“I am aware of that lamentable fact, but it has power over the Freedman's Bureau, which you have pressed into your service, and point to so complacently when you desire to intimidate the white people or encourage the blacks.”

“Do not place too much faith in the administration, sir. We ‘philanthropists,’ as we are contemptuously called here, have made up our minds to manage affairs here as we see fit ; and the president will find it to his interest to keep out of our way. If in the

past we had the ability to make tools of the government, the army and navy, as you are reported to have said, is it likely that now, in the hour of our triumph, we will be balked by a plebeian president, who is really a rebel at heart, and who already knows that he holds his office only by our sufferance.”

“Will you please inform me whom you refer to when you speak of ‘our sufferance’?”

“I refer to the power behind the throne. The power which forced Mr. Lincoln to rise superior to his indifference on the subject of slavery and become the mouthpiece of the Abolition party—to become ashamed of his truckling to the constitution and traditions of the country, so-called, and to consult only the interests of human rights and universal freedom: The power which made General Sherman prevaricate like a whipped school boy after his disgraceful terms of surrender offered to General Johnston; and which forced even the sphinx-like Grant to palter with reference to the secretaryship of war. The power which has made the Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, and many others, so earnest in its cause as to be considered monomaniacs by the traitorous opposition party; and the power which will yet hurl Andy Johnson from the presidency, and bury in the political potter’s-field all who oppose it!”

“Do not place too much reliance on the continued angry passions of those whose cooperation has given you power. Fanaticism, disguised as patriotism, may direct affairs in time of great public excitement, but the excitement of our people is passing off, and your fanaticism is growing too large for its mask. The true patriots, who have no fear of your political potter’s-field, will thwart your wicked designs; and though the rabble may now

applaud, the finger of scorn will yet find in you its polar star !”

Without deigning to reply, the old lady turned her back on the impertinent young man, and swept grandly down the middle aisle of the now empty building.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A PROPHET WITHOUT HONOR SPEAKS.

"The dread of evil is the worst of ill."—PROCTOR.

*"Nature shakes
About us; and the universal frame's
So loose, that it but wants another push
To leap from its hinges."*—LEE'S ŒDIPUS.

AT the time of the visit of the young masters' of "The Oaks," to the "Bethel Mission School," it was estimated that of the three, or more, thousand negroes in the fertile region, south of Barrensville, there were less than four hundred at work in the corn and cotton fields. The price of cotton was so very high, and the enforced purchase of supplies of corn was so ruinous to planters, under the changed condition of affairs, that unusual efforts had been put forth by the white people to insure the production of both crops. Liberal propositions had been made to the colored people, which had induced three-fourths of them, or perhaps a larger proportion, to make contracts, for wages or for one-half the produce, to cultivate the greater portion of the best lands. The majority of the planters were without cash in hand to clean up, fence and stock their plantations, and had been forced to borrow money on mortgages, at a ruinous rate of interest, in order to be able to make their lands give them a bare subsistence. To those who aspired to more than a mere subsistence for their families, or to a very large majority of them, the

failure to make a crop meant ruin ; and self-interest, that motive which we usually believe governs the impulses of the human family, demanded of the land owners that they should do all in their power to make the colored laborers contented and happy. Aside from the promptings of self-interest, the general feeling toward the negro was gratitude for his faithfulness during the war, in addition to the kindly feelings which had always been entertained for him ; and mingled with all was a feeling of pity for him, now that he had the shaping of his own future in his hands, and was surrounded, petted and flattered by fanatical zealots, who, it was believed, cared for him only as a tool to be used ; and who, it was known, knew no more of his capabilities and natural instincts, than they did of the mental peculiarities of the fire-worshiping Ghebers of Persia. Despite indications already given, the white people could not believe that the negro would suffer his passions to be so highly inflamed against them as to cause him to ignore his own personal interests, and, by violating contracts and quitting all profitable labor, refuse to provide subsistence for those dependent on him. In the early spring, when the corn and cotton were planted, prospects seemed flattering for peace and plenty, and a return of the olden time prosperity. But the serpent was in this promised Eden. His trail had been seen during the previous year, and though he lay comparatively dormant during the short winter, he was only waiting for the hot suns of summer to unfold his coils and tempt the unwary by offering the apple of discord as the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

When the hot suns came league meetings, class meetings, love-feasts, and "singing-schools" multiplied, and became more earnest in their work, and urgent for full and regular attendance ; and there was less and less time

to attend to the cultivation of crops. The white people, too, became “overbearing,” and evinced a desire to consider their laborers as being slaves still. They even went so far as to object to their horses and mules being ridden to league meeting and “musters” without their knowledge and consent. These objections made the negroes unhappy, for had not their labor created all the wealth in the country, and hadn’t they the right to use it, and even to appropriate it to their exclusive use, if they should choose to contend for their just rights? And were they not exercising true Christian forbearance in refraining from asserting and enforcing those rights? Of course they were! Those who had been prompted by a disinterested love for the negro race, and by an overpowering sense of their direct responsibility to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for the sins of all mankind, to face death on the battlefield—a few miles in rear of the army—said so; and could God’s chosen people lie like the common white trash that came into existence beyond the confines of New England? No, indeed! The negroes desired peace and harmony as much as the white people claimed to desire them, but they owed a duty to themselves and to their posterity; and even peace and harmony would be purchased at too dear a price if they should necessitate the ignoring of their rights of social equality, and the leaving untaught of a lesson in humility, which it was their privilege and duty to teach, “even as they had been taught,” so far as was practicable under existing circumstances.

It may easily be imagined that the harmony which the best interests of all demanded should be preserved, had elements affecting it almost as disturbing as those which caused the misunderstandings between the famous cats of Kilkenny. The white people submitted patiently, and

with an equanimity that astonished the teachers, to their lessons in humility ; but matters soon got so bad, with reference to the unauthorized use of their property, that they were forced to adopt general rules for self-protection. Accordingly, the planters resolved, generally in neighborhood meetings, that their horses and mules should not be ridden, even on Sundays, without their consent, to be obtained in each individual case ; and when so ridden, the party or parties violating the resolution should be considered as having hired the animals, and should be charged with the same, at the rate of one dollar per day ; and if the party should be a laborer for fixed wages, he should be charged for all time so lost from work, at the *per diem* rate of his monthly pay.

The enforcing of this resolution was the fatal feather that fractured the spinal column of the Union League's and mission-school's patience and forbearance ; and was the "direful spring" of more "woes unnumbered" than were ever dreamed of in the philosophy of "Achilles' wrath." It was regarded as evincing a fixed determination on the part of the former masters to keep the blacks under "a serfdom more galling, if possible, and less to be desired than had been chattel slavery." The negroes resented it as an insult, which said, as if in plain words, that they, like the horses and mules, were only fit to work the land and be the hired slaves of those who had formerly claimed them as property. Contracts for the year's labor were abandoned by many, and generally when half the negroes had disappeared from a place, the mules, cows, hogs, etc., would also begin to disappear—"lost, strayed or surreptitiously seized for debt." These surreptitious seizures were taught to be not morally wrong—of course, many did not pause to view the matter from a moral

standpoint—for had not the negroes been laboring for five or six months, and now having been “forced by unjust and contemptuous treatment” to abandon their contracts, were they not entitled to compensation for the labor they had done? It is true the weeds had sprung up and destroyed the abandoned crops, and the planters had lost all the money expended in fitting up for the cultivation of the land, but the negroes were not to blame for that! They had labored and delved, and no one could deny that “the laborer is worthy of his hire!”

Those who had contracted to work for money wages, with the understanding, of course, that the work was to be carried through to the desired result of a gathered and housed crop, had still another advantage. In the great eagerness to procure laborers, the planters having ascertained that the negroes had become suspicious, and were averse to “putting their hands to” a written contract, had for the most part, made verbal agreements only; and when the Freedman’s Bureau was appealed to, it was an easy matter for any negro to “outswear” the best white man in the country, and to trump every witness he could produce with two or three, or half a dozen, of their own color. In such contests, the office of the Bureau became a mere polling booth in which the witness deposited his testimony for his favorite, regardless of any personal knowledge of facts. It is proper to state, however, that there were some honorable exceptions to this rule, and that some Bureau officers were conscientious, unprejudiced men; but it is also proper to state that the “missionaries” generally procured the removal of such sooner or later, and generally as soon as they had clearly evinced their want of a proper fanatical bias. One of the brotherhood who was never removed, but, on the contrary, was honored

and promoted, speaks thus of the fraternity and their bias :

“ Perhaps the most outrageous and debasing of all the acts of the Bureau, in the eyes of those who loved to term themselves ‘the South,’ was the fact that its officers and agents first of all allowed the colored man to be sworn in opposition to and in contradiction of the word of a white man.

* * * To be summoned before the officer of the Bureau, confronted with a negro who denied his most solemn averments, and was *protected* in so doing by the officer, who, perhaps, showed the bias of the oppressor by believing the negro instead of the gentleman, was unquestionably, to the Southerner, the most degrading ordeal he could by any possibility be called upon to go through.” *

The ordeal was considered degrading, but not to the gentleman. He felt himself to be above the reach of the malignant spite of such creatures. It was degrading to the negro ; for the premium offered to perjury was robbing him of the morality and civilization which were the outgrowth of two centuries of vigorous teaching in the school of slavery, and was rendering him less fit to become the enfranchised sovereign which it was seen the lust for party power intended to make him. It was considered as tending to produce a certain degree of degradation amongst the less conscientious of the white people also ; for many felt justified in fighting perjury with suborned testimony, in order to protect themselves from robbery, or from false imprisonment. The thought of all this was extremely humiliating to the man who had been accustomed to feel a pride in the civilization of his age and people ; but not so humiliating as was the degrading sight of a tribunal, assuming to represent the

* “Bricks without Straw.” Pages 113-14.

best phase of that civilization, and yet suffering itself to be actuated by petty spite toward an honorable and unarmed foe, who had asked to be no longer considered as a foe, to show a vindictive and unreasoning leaning in favor of the most degraded and vicious class of society.

All of these troubles had been bravely met by the masters of “The Oaks.” Mr. Stewart had made all the contracts, and therefore Mr. Conrad, who knew nothing of them, of his own knowledge, could not swear in the cases. All of the negroes employed on the place, except those who were formerly Mr. Stewart’s slaves, had been hired for fixed wages, to be paid in money out of the crops which should be produced by themselves. Dick had not only organized all the old slaves belonging to the place, who could be heard of and communicated with,* into a squad, with himself as foreman, for the cultivation of several hundred acres, but had also hunted up and hired the “stray niggers” who had now become deserters. These, as just stated, had been hired for fixed wages, but had signed no written contract; and the lusty weeds had hardly overtopped their abandoned crops before it was suggested to them to follow the general example and claim all arrearages of unpaid wages up to the time of their desertion. For a time it seemed to the masters of “The Oaks,” that in addition to the many thousands lost by the desertion of the negroes, they would have to pay

* It is a singular fact that fewer than fifty per cent. of the negroes who went off with the various Federal armies, before the close of the war, have ever, to this day, been heard of by their friends and families. There was a general rumor, just after the close of the war, that negroes were being induced to go on pleasure trips and were taken over to Cuba and sold. The writer laughed at these rumors at the time, but he has since had testimony, which he cannot doubt, proving that they were not entirely without foundation in fact. Those who enlisted as soldiers all returned, or were accounted for.

other thousands for labor which, so far as any benefit to themselves was concerned, had as well have been expended on the desert of Sahara. But all of the contracts had been made through Dick, and when the case came before the officer of the Bureau, Mr. Stewart was surprised to find that all of his former slaves had as full personal knowledge of the contracts as Dick himself had. This gave him a clear majority of witnesses, and the officer agreed to approve a compromise by which the parties of the *important* part were to have all that they could harvest from the abandoned fields. After the adjournment of "court" Dick looked rather sheepish as he apologized to the young master, "Dem abolitioner preachers an' skool teachers says its 'cordin to scripiter' to fight de debil wid fire."

Despondent and almost hopeless, Mr. Stewart wrote to a Northern politician who, when statesmanship was valued at its true worth, and before politics had degenerated into a scramble for office, had been considered one of the bright lights of his section :

"We have lost all but honor and civilization, and now efforts are being made to rob us of these through the agency of missions, and the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees and Abandoned Lands. Secret societies, backed by these, are making rapid strides toward the accomplishment of what the 'Red String Gang' organization failed to do just previous to and during the war. We are being attacked through the freedmen, and by means of these, in a new and most embarrassing manner. It is as if the ward, who has been reared in one's house, had been made frantic with drink, and then armed and set upon his guardian. We have a warm feeling of attachment for our former slaves, who, though still, as a rule, attached to

their former owners, are being inspired with a fierce hatred of the white people generally. The white people owe them a debt of gratitude for their fidelity and good behavior during the war. It is true, that as different sections of the country were occupied by Federal troops, some few proved recreant to the trust imposed in them, but the percentage was very small. Fully ninety-five per cent. proved faithful to the end. What other people ever had so large a proportion of an unhomogeneous element of its population true under such circumstances of temptation on one hand and trials and hardships on the other? The history of the world will be searched in vain for a parallel to the devotion which our slaves evinced toward our wives and children during the entire term of the war. It is true history furnishes some striking illustrations of the fidelity of slaves in other countries, but none before were ever so beset by the offer of bribes, bounties, flatteries, threats, and all that might be calculated to influence to disloyalty and desertion. More than two thousand years ago the Carthaginian leader Hasdrubal, was assassinated by a slave whose master he had put to death, but it will never be known how many Hasdrubals fell during our war—‘killed by bushwackers’—when behind the bush was only the dusky form of a black avenger of wrongs and outrages perpetrated upon some defenseless old master or young mistress.

“Is it not natural that we should feel a deep sense of gratitude toward these people? Their allegiance, it is true, was, for the most part, only of a passive character, for we did not choose to ask them to fight for a government which meant to keep them in servitude, but did so large a proportion of the population of New England render even passive allegiance to the cause of their country in the

second war with England, and again in the war with Mexico? Let the recording scribe of true history blush as she makes answer to the question!

“I do not say this in a sarcastic spirit to wound your sectional pride, but only as a means of giving you an idea of what should be, and is, our feeling toward our former slaves, and the consequent embarrassment of our present position. Their hearts are being fired with a fanatical race-hatred, which, while it stubbornly makes exceptions of former owners and other friends, is fast becoming an unbearable instrument of torture. It would be hailed—joyfully, we believe—as an act of rebellion if we should strike down the Iscariot hands that are making tools of them, and we have not the heart to strike the poor ignorant tool. Will not passion cool after a time, and is there no possibility of present relief from the devilish influences of bigoted fanatics and crazy religionists?

“You are one of one hundred national patriots of whom, including the President of the United States, we have decided to ask advice. We know that the narrow confines of your section do not bound your emotions and sentiments of humanity and patriotism, and in the name of a desponding and almost despairing people, I ask you, who are surrounded by the spirit and influences which direct the shaping of our destiny, to give us the benefit of your counsel and advice, and to interpret for us the handwriting upon the wall.”

A few days later the wise man, who, by the politicians of his section, was accounted of less consequence than the Fool who does Errands, wrote, in reply:

“There can be no doubt that slavery in the South was a sin, if not a crime, in this the nineteenth century; but in order to abolish it, we were guilty of a greater sin or

crime. Your sin had no active voluntary element about it, except your frankly avowed determination not to make experimental changes in the institution of slavery which might possibly be fraught with danger to the harmony and civilization of your section. Ours was both active and voluntary, and was reached through the dark by-ways of political bad faith and treachery.

“But, while slavery was a crime against the *civilized* slave in this age, it was, in its beginning in this country, only a crime against the communities on whom it was imposed. New England, assisted in part by old England, took the wild savage, whose mind was as dark as the rayless night of barbarism, which, from the beginning of time, has brooded over his land, from his native jungles and entered him in your school of civilization. In doing this they committed no crime against the savage. But after he had attained proficiency in your school—a degree of civilization never before known to any of his race—it was proper that the school should be discontinued. The civilized world can only disapprove of the method of its discontinuance. New England gave you these wild Africans for your gold, but she has expended the gold in wresting them from you. Whether this was an atonement, or a double crime, is a question for moral philosophers whose minds are free from the prejudices engendered by the political animosities of this country.

“As to the ‘hand-writing upon the wall,’ no man who is less than a prophet can interpret that for you. Of one thing, however, I feel assured. Years, decades, perhaps generations, must pass, before Southern statesmanship will be permitted to have any considerable influence in the affairs of the nation. This is a fact which all thinking patriots must regret. The splendid career of the Republic,

its great expansion, its increase in wealth and population, all bear witness to the excellence of Southern statesmanship as a controlling influence in the past. Think what would be the comparatively contracted and insignificant area of our territory if New England statesmanship could have had a controlling influence in the affairs of the nation! Besides, your statesmen were honest and incorruptible, and singularly free from sectional greed and selfishness. They were vigilant guardians of the public treasury, and ever watchful opponents of heavy taxation, extravagant expenditures, and partial legislation. They never sought directly or indirectly any advantage over my section or any other section of the country. On the contrary, they demanded equality and even-handed justice for all, and in commercial affairs were our best friends.

“As regards the counsel which you ask, I regret to say that I do not feel competent to advise. Passion, of course, will cool after a time, with the great majority of the people, but I fear there is no possibility of present relief from the evil influences of which you complain. Politicians are playing, as usual, at cross-purposes, and if the most radical and unreasonable shall continue to direct the affairs of the country, I fear the South will have to submit to a tidal wave of barbarism if, as you fear, the negroes, under their present advisers and leaders, shall ignore or disregard the teachings of Christianity and civilization which your people imparted to them. The old abolition element in my section, which has been the controlling influence throughout the war, will not retire to the shades of despised obscurity, from which it emerged only a few years ago, without a desperate struggle, in which it is willing to sacrifice and ruin not only the despised South, but our present form of Constitutional

Republican government. It cannot hope to make political allies of you, its hereditary enemies, and will therefore strive to destroy forever your power for future influence in the government; and will seek to give the political power of your section into the hands of the former slaves, and such native renegades and Northern adventurers as shall affiliate with them for the purpose of procuring the spoils of office. The first step, looking to the accomplishment of this end, is, of course, to destroy the bond of sympathy between the former master and his former slave, and to create in its stead a feeling of bitter hatred. It is a diabolical plot, and is a fit sample of the spirit by which that fanatical faction is usually actuated; but you have only to wait, and the good sense and true patriotism of the majority at the North will, when passion shall have grown a little cooler, make all things as they should be.

“‘Learn to labor and to wait,’ and beyond a dark belt, the extent of which cannot yet be defined, is peace and prosperity for your people; and if you continue true to yourselves—stout in heart and steadfast in principles as of old—there is a brilliant future in store for your section.” *

* These letters contain extracts from genuine letters, some of which have been published.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AUTHORIZED OUTLAWRY AND LAWLESS JUSTICE.

*" Their friendship is a lurking snare,
Their honor but an idle breath,
Their smile, the smile that traitors wear,
Their love is hate, their life is death."*

—W. G. SIMMS.

" Just men only are free, the rest are slaves."

—CHAPMAN.

SOME days after the occurrence at Bethel Church, Mr. Conrad and Peter Dillard were summoned to appear before the agent of the Freedman's Bureau, at Barrensville, to answer the charge of having interfered with the exercises of the Bethel Mission-School, created a disturbance and interrupted public worship. It was intimated to them, by the officer who served the notice, that they would be allowed to introduce their "accomplices" as witnesses, if the latter chose to take the risk of criminalizing themselves.

"Well, Stewart," laughed Mr. Conrad, as the two sat on the front porch, after having directed the "military sheriff" to Peter Dillard's shop; "isn't that rich? Ordered to appear before a little popinjay Bureau official for having played the rowdy and rough at a church gathering!"

"Yes; a rich joke on you," replied Mr. Stewart, with a smile, "but it would have no element of humor in or about it, if you had chanced to be an 'infernal rebel.' These Bureau officials love to exercise their little authority,

and are more despotic in their small way than the autocrat of all the Russias. There are some exceptions, however ; one, I am told at Huntsville. Man, is by nature, but a high order of animal, with the animal instinct of tyranny, or a desire for mastery, fully developed ; and only true Christianity, backed by a high order of civilization, can eradicate his natural propensity in that direction. The more imperfectly qualified he may be by those elevating influences to become a ruler, the better qualified he is to be a tyrant.”

“But, my friend,” said Mr. Conrad, seriously, “it is claimed that these men are, almost exclusively, active working Christians, and have been selected for these positions, chiefly on account of their conspicuous prominence as Christian soldiers.”

“True, but there are two classes of ‘active working Christians.’ One does not advertise itself as ‘Christian soldiers,’ but teaches by precept and example the spirit of true religion and the duty of love and charity toward all men. The other teaches the doctrines of a sect or party, which may or may not have made unto itself a golden image. They feel the mad zeal of religionism or partisanship and set themselves up as ‘Christian soldiers,’ feeling a restless desire to impose upon others, that which gives to their own souls no feeling of restfulness. Love, with them, means toleration toward those who do not attack or ridicule their pet theories, and charity means the giving of food and raiment to the needy who have not offended them in that particular. This class made a saint of John Brown, preached his villainy as the acts of one inspired, denied the Christianity and civilization of the Southern white people, got up the crusade against them which has spread ruin over the land, and are now laboring to pre-

pare the negroes and lead them in a new crusade, which shall force us to become, in self-defense, what they would have the world believe us to be—outlaws and murderers !”

“My dear fellow,” said Mr. Conrad, cheeringly “you must not give way to gloomy forebodings. Matters will soon grow better. Passion will wear itself out, and want and deprivation, which must result from the present course of the negroes, will bring back the plain, common sense with which I think they are endowed, as a class, more highly than some communities of white people I have known.”

“Yes ; you are correct in that. The negroes have much plain practical sense when not biased by passion. But they are an emotional people, and when their passions are aroused, reason loses its controlling influence. There is no earthly good that they are not capable of sacrificing, under the goadings of a spiteful go-between, to a thirst for revenge. In this they do not differ greatly from their white brethren of a similar degree of civilization ; and such white brethren, who are possessed of a higher degree of intelligence than they, are teaching them that the Southern whites, not only wronged them in the past beyond the powers of forgiveness, but now despise them for their amiability, and are still doing them the greatest possible wrong in denying them social equality. Nearly all of the personal collisions between the two races that have occurred in the country, have resulted, directly or indirectly, from the negroes’ awkward, and generally spiteful, efforts to assert and enforce their social equality. This, they are taught, is a very necessary thing for them to do. In their ignorant zeal in this direction they offer insults, that are generally passed by unnoticed, for which their male teachers, if they should offer them, would be

caned as often as they were offered. You recollect the case which occurred in the Barrens, a couple of months ago. A negro soldier went to the house of a poor widow to buy dried fruit, as he claimed. A chair was offered him on the porch, but he went into the chamber and sat down by the side of the daughter, who was sewing. She, very properly, arose and went into the porch where her mother was. This was resented as an insult and personal abuse was the consequence. In the course of the remarks which ensued, the girl asserted that she intended never to associate with negroes. This very natural but unnecessary remark so incensed the negro that he slapped her face. You know the result. The brother, a youth of fifteen, who was chopping wood in the yard, went with his axe to the rescue of his sister and was killed. The man was a soldier in the United States Army, and the boy was the son of ‘a rebel,’ and an opposer of the sacred cause of ‘human rights,’ and there was no difficulty in making out a clear case of self-defense on the evidence of the mother and sister.” *

“But his triumphant acquittal was a bad thing for him, for he was killed within the next week.”

“Yes ; assassinated ! Shot down like a wild beast in the woods ! Some honest man or party of men forced to become outlaws in order to mete out justice ! It is the worst feature in all our surroundings, that quiet, law-abiding people have been, and will be forced to do deeds that are revolting to them, in order that it may be seen that there is punishment in store for all those who violate the rights of person or property. Even you and I suffered testimony to be used in the protection of our property which we know to have been suborned.”

* This is a true incident.

"Yes; it does look as if, for the present, the country is given over to the spirit of evil, but all will come right by and by. Rest is the normal condition of all things, of passions as well as of matter, and after a time the negroes will be as good friends as ever to the white people."

"Never, as a people, while they hearken to the teachings of such creatures as now surround them. Unless the Christianity and civilization which we gave them, shall exert a powerful influence toward neutralizing such teachings as they are now getting, or unless we can discover some means to combat it, a war of races is inevitable, and one race or the other will be exterminated or driven out of the cotton belt. If it should ever come to that, who, but a silly fanatic of the Puritan breed, could doubt what would be the result, despite all the troops at the command of the United States Government?"

"Oh, it could never become so bad as that, I hope. The feeling on the part of a great many negroes is still in sympathy with the white people; and even the evil-disposed do not seem so rabid as they were a short time since."

"This only seems so to you because the latter class have left this plantation, and you no longer have to deal with them. The sympathy of a great many negroes is with us, as you say; but, as regards a majority of these, they are actuated only by personal liking for the families and relatives of their former owners, or for other individuals, as is the case with Peter Dillard, who have won their esteem. When the tempter and slanderer tries to work upon these, they think of some favorite as the type of those against whom it is sought to prejudice them, and stand steadfast; but how would it be if they were

removed from these personal influences? As regards the other class, I should think, from Dick's report, that you had a fair sample of their aggressive insolence yesterday in Barrensville.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed Mr. Conrad, coloring slightly, “I thought Dick was so cut up about that matter that he would never mention it to any one.”

“How was it? Dick only mentioned the matter to ask permission to ride one of the horses to Barrensville in search of the offending party, which, of course, I refused.”

“Well, as we entered the town, Dick was driving, and I was sitting on the rear seat. There were a good many negroes loafing about, and I noticed that several made remarks intended for my ears, intimating that I was putting on rather too much style for a ‘d—d rebel.’ As we passed through the suburbs on the other side, I noticed, some distance ahead, a squad of a half dozen or more young negro men talking to a long-haired white man in citizen's clothes. Some remark was made concerning us, for all turned to look at us as we approached, and several laughed, as if at a witticism. One stalwart young fellow stepped out and placed himself in the centre of the beaten track of the road, assuming an attitude, facing us, which seemed to say that he intended to dispute our right of way. ‘Mars' Conrad,’ said Dick, ‘I's gwine to jam dis buggy pole right plump into dat nigger's buttermilk jug, ef he don't git out'n de way!’ But I gave him peremptory orders what he was to do, and he is too good a fellow to disobey. When he turned out of the smooth track to avoid striking the man, the latter looked into his face and said: ‘I kin wallop de hind sights off'n any black snake of a white man's nigger dat was ever pupped; an' I dares any rebel in dese diggins to let me hear him say he's too good to

drive de buggy of a colored gent'man !' The incident, of course, only amused me—I don't know how I should have felt if I had chanced to be a 'rebel' of the sort named, but I felt great sympathy for Dick, poor fellow, who turned a shade or two blacker from suppressed anger. When we turned the corner a few squares or so away, Dick suddenly commenced feeling about his person, and declared that he had dropped his handkerchief, and must go back a short distance to seek it ; but, unfortunately for the poor fellow's ambition to get himself beaten into a jelly, I asked him what it was that bulged his side pocket so greatly, and he looked as if he could weep when he admitted that it was his cotton bandanna.* But here comes our friend, Peter Dillard, breaking his way through the weeds that represent ten or fifteen thousand dollars lost to us and our heirs forever, as if fleeing from the 'Impending Crisis.' ”

“Hello, Peter !” called Mr. Stewart, as the negro approached within speaking distance, “do you fancy that the ‘patterrollers’ of the olden time are after you ?”

“No, sar, Mars' Chyarles—good evenin', sar ; sarvant, Mars' Conrad—no, sar, it's wuss dan any patterrollers,” replied the negro, wiping the perspiration from his brow. “It's de Buro' sheriff ! When we use to be gallivantin' aroun' in de ole times, ef we met up wid de patterrollers, all we had to do was to tell a straight tale, or to git home by de niggest cut. But dar ain't no gittin' away from dese Buro' patterrollers. I ain't 'feard of 'em for myself, for dey's desput sweet on de niggers, es you knows, but de sheriff tole me you all was 'rested too ; an' I didn't know ef you'd stan' it.”

“Oh, yes,” laughed Mr. Conrad, “we'll stand it—you

* This incident is true in every particular.

and I. Stewart here, isn't into it yet awhile; but he doesn't seem to feel slighted at all."

"Well, I's glad o' dat! Dey can't hurt us, 'cause we kin prove dat we never was rebels—leastways not much. But I feels skeered sometimes 'bout de gent'man fokes in dis country dat use to own niggers, an' den fit in de army agin de Union!"

"Why so?"

"Well, sar; I has seed an' hyeard a heap o' strange things in my time, but de most o' de strangeness begun in de prison in Ohio, whar dey made me crap off Mars' Gineral Morgan's har, an' promised me ef I'd be a soger to give me a whole county o' land in de Souf. But dey capped off de strangeness last night at de class meetin' an' love feast."

"What happened there?"

"Well, sar; I's under 'a obligation,' dey calls it, not to tell tales out'n skool; but I kin say dis much: 'Spectability ain't 'spectability no longer, an' 'ligion ain't 'ligion no mo', an' niggers never was niggers no how!"

"What does all that mean?"

"Mean? Well, I don't zackly know myself! But dey says all de ole things is done rubbed out an' everything is done got bran, spankin' new. In 'ligious matters we all has got to take a new start for glory from de word 'go'; every man for hissself, an' de devil take de hindmost one! But I 'spect he'll be mighty apt to git de foremost one fust, like partridges runnin' into a net."

"Tell us what happened at the meeting," said Mr. Conrad, with much interest.

"Well, sar, I can't zackly tell what happened, but I's

free to tell what didn't happen. We didn't talk 'bout 'bein mis'able sinners, an' wantin' to love our nabers, an' prayin' for dem dat spitefully uses us, an' 'turnin' good for evil, an' lovin' nobody, an' prayin' for nuthin'. An' I kin tell what is gwine to happen. Peter Dillard is gwine to pull out from dat new-fangled church; an' ef dey don't start up our ole church agin, an ef I can't find no road to de worl' to come but de one dese fokes wants us to travel, I's gwine to blaze out a path throo de woods for Peter an' his fokes."

"Going to start a church of your own?"

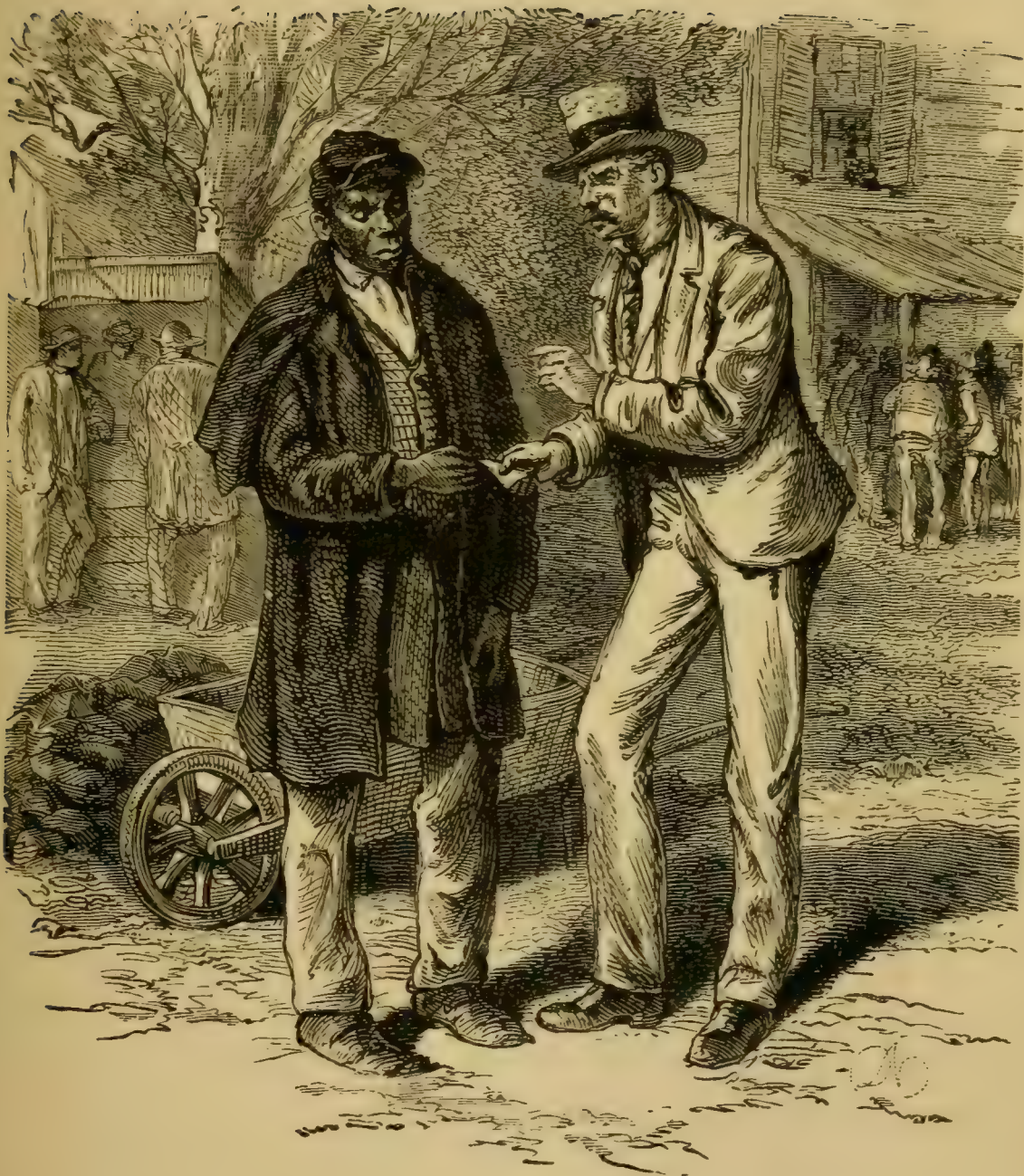
"No, sar; I ain't good 'nuff to start a good one, an' I's too good to start a bad one. But I means to play a lone hand in 'ligious matters, an' foller de compass de Blessed One gin us, even ef it does lead me 'long a lonesome path."

"What has become of your old preachers?"

"Pass'n Ellit's dead, sar; an' dem dat ain't dead can't git no nigger congregations now. Dese new-fangled Christons says de ole preachers dat use to preach up 'sarvants 'bey your marsters,' was agents o' de evil spirrit, an' was survivin' o' him, an' a doin' o' his work, an' dat its too late now for 'em to try to play sho' 'nuff Christons, es dey didn't have de pluck to do it befo'."

"Perhaps they think the old preachers here will not keep step to the march of progress."

"No more'n dey won't! Dey won't keep step to de march o' nuthin' but de blessed gospel, des as de Saviour hisself teachd it. What He says dey says, an' what He didn't say dey don't say. Dey don't think, like dese new-fangled fokes, dat ef de Saviour had put off comin' till now, he'd o' bin a heap smarter'n he was, an' made two or three new commandments 'bout our white fokes an' de niggers."



“When the tempter and slanderer tries to work upon these,” etc.

“Don’t you know, Peter,” said Mr. Conrad, with a laugh, “it is claimed by these ‘new-fangled fokes’ that ‘in science and religion, humanity is making stupendous strides?’” *

“Well, sar; I don’t know nothin’ ’bout de science business, but I know dis ’bout ’ligion: All de new strides is strides away from Him dat died for sinners; an’ dem dat makes de ‘*spendous*’ strides is mighty apt to stride plump into de middle o’ de bottomless pit. I ain’t in de stridin’ bisness, an’ dat’s de reason I’s gwine to pull out an’ run a little game o’ my own in ’ligious matters.”

“So you think these ‘new-fangled fokes’ are taking those stupendous strides, eh?”

“Well, it ’pears to me dat dar ’ligion ain’t nothin’ but strides o’ one sort an’ another; but I ’spect de ‘*spendous*’ stride was de one dey made from de blessed Saviour to John Brown. Dey don’t leave de Saviour clean out in de cold, but dey preaches a heap more ’bout John Brown. When it comes to Jesus of Nazareth an’ John Brown of Bostin’, or somewhar or ’nother, dey don’t know which is which.”

“Ah! Peter; remember, ‘thou shalt not bear false witness!’”

“’Taint no false witness, boss; I wish ’twas! But I come on bisness. Does you know how many witnesses dar is agin’ us?”

“All those at the church, I presume, except your party. Say six hundred.”

“Den we’s gone up for all de money dey wants out’n us. Ef you kin find a way out’n dis rumpus widout sufferin’ in de munny puss monstous bad, den I’ll say,

* A sentiment from “Bricks Without Straw.” Page 222.

stronger dan ever, dat white fokes minds beats niggers. We can't git more'n 'bout twenty witnesses, 'sides dem dat was at de church wid us, an' dat wont be a drap in de bucket agin six hundred, an' maby more."

"We will not take a single witness, Peter," laughed Mr. Conrad. "We will rely upon the justice of the court."

"Well, sar, you lays it on to me for smartness, but you's gwine to git tripped up dis time, ef you hears my racket! Didn't Mars' Judge Garnet 'ly on de justis o' de cote an' git left? Bill Smiff rid his buggy hoss to de League meetin', an' when de ole man quarrelled 'bout it he called him a 'white head ole rebel son of a gun,' an' he hit him wid his crutch, an' Bill snatched de crutch an' beat de ole man shameful, an' den 'ported him to de Buro. He 'lied on de justis o' de cote widout no witnesses but hissself an' it cost him fifty dollars an' a mont' in jail."

"But Bill Smith didn't make much by the operation," laughed Mr. Conrad, "if I have been correctly informed."

"So he didn't! Some fokes went dar wid skeer-faces on an' lynched him till his back looked like a black barber's pole. But dat didn't cure de ole man dat was sick in de jail nor bring back his munny. But it cured Bill Smiff an' dem o' suckin' aigs es sho' es you's born."

"How do you know how his back looked?"

"Well, sar," replied Peter, with a sly wink; "Dick an' me keeps all our secrets in partnership, an' I was dar."

"How could you disregard all the teaching you have heard about standing up for your color?"

“Well, boss, I don’t count by color ! It’s jestice an’ honest principles. De fokes dat is agin dem is agin me, an’ agin what makes de difference ’twixt me an’ a wile Injun. Ef anybody ’tacks dem dey ’tacks me, an’ I’s gwine to hit back if I kin.”

“‘But I say unto you, resent ye not evil,’” quoted Mr. Conrad.

“An dat’s what I says too, sar, onless you can’t help it. But Solomon says somethin’ ’bout sparinn’ de rod an’ spilin’ de chile ; an’ dese niggers ain’t nothin’ but chil’n dat has been turned out o’ skool an’ has tuk up wid de bad boys to rob de watermillion patches an’ fling rocks at fokses winders. But I want’s to ax you to len’ me a hoss to ride Saddy to de cote. I’s gwine to put on my uniform, dat’s mos’ es good es new, an’ I want’s to go in style. Ef I’s got to play a dummy hand I want’s all de trumps I kin git.”

All matters having been arranged to Peter’s satisfaction, he went out into the field to have a talk with Dick, having first appointed to meet Mr. Conrad to receive “orders” the evening before the portentous day.

CHAPTER XXX.

LEX NON SCRIPTA.

*"Who stabs my name would stab my person too,
Did not the hangman's axe lie in the way."*

—CROWN'S HENRY VII.

"Judge not thy fellow-man till thou art similarly situated."

—JEWISH TALMUD.

WHEN Mr. Conrad and Peter Dillard arrived at the office of the Bureau Agency, they found the officer in charge alone, and, to all appearances, not in a very amiable mood. The former introduced himself, and then introduced Peter as his friend and ally. The officer's mind seemed to be preoccupied, but he nodded to them civilly, and motioned them to be seated on a bench on the opposite side of the room. After eyeing them coolly for a few moments, he said, abruptly, to Mr. Conrad :

"I understand that you claim to have been a Union soldier, sir, and an officer of high rank."

"It is a mistake, sir," said Mr. Conrad, bowing politely.

"Ah ! I thought so, but the ladies at the Bethel Mission-School understood you to say so.

"They erred, sir ; I said I had fought in the Union army, but I made no reference to rank, and *claimed* nothing."

"Did you fight in the Union army ?"

"I did, sir."

“Where?”

“In Virginia.”

“What was your rank?”

“I have not claimed to have had any rank.”

“Ah! But you claim to have been in the Union army?”

“I *stated* on that one occasion that I had fought in the Union army.”

“I see! Have you any proof of the fact?”

“Proof! I presume my honorable scars would be no proof, as they might, for aught you could know to the contrary, have been received on the other side.”

“You, also, claim to have fought in the Union army,” said the officer, turning with evident annoyance from Mr. Conrad and speaking to Peter.

“Yes, boss; I fit for de Union; leastways I was in de army, an’ done what tothers done,” replied Peter, promptly.

“I see that you wear your uniform, and don’t rely upon your scars to prove your loyalty.”

“Lawd, no, boss! I ain’t got no scyars. I fit wid Ginerel Sherman in Gyawagy an’ dem parts, an’ ain’t seed no chance to git no scyars, onless a feller fell over de fence, or some ole ’oman hit him on de head wid de fryin’-pan while he was robin’ de sto’ room.”

“You are pleased to be facetious, sir,” said the officer, sternly.

“Yes, boss; I b’lieves in tellin’ de troof an’ shamin’ de devil, es de sayin’ goes.”

“I am glad to hear that you are a truthful fellow,” said the officer, eyeing him sharply. “What excuse have you for interfering with Bethel Mission-School, disturbing public worship, and making a rowdy speech?”

“None, boss; ’cause I didn’t do it.”

“Didn’t you climb in at the window, at the head of a party armed with hickory sticks?”

“Yes, sar.”

“What for?”

“To bust dem niggers’ heads ef dey tried to put anybody out o’ dat church.”

“Why should they desire to put out any person unless he was disturbing the exercises?”

“Cause dey’s got no sense an’ no ’ligion.”

“You and your party had a monopoly of those qualities, I suppose?”

“Yes, boss; we had de biggest sheer of all dat was in dat house dat day.”

“I am glad to hear that you were so pious a party. Why did one of the white men—the one present—offend the congregation by making an incendiary speech?”

“He didn’t make no ’cendiary speech tell all de fuss was over, an’ dat speech done ’em more good dan all de sarmunts dey has hyeard for a year an’ mo’.”

“What did he say in his speech?”

“We would prefer to hear that from the other side,” interrupted Mr. Conrad.

“I have the report of the ladies of the mission, which you can read, sir, if you choose.

“I prefer to hear their statement made under oath, sir.”

“I have agreed not to require them to appear as witnesses, sir. Their charge is simply that you interfered with the exercises of the school, disturbed public worship, and made an incendiary speech despite their earnest protests; and that Peter Dillard backed you up with a show of force.”

“The charge is false, sir.”

"All 'cept my part of it, Mars' Conrad," interrupted Peter.

"Yes ; except that Peter Dillard made a display of force which prevented bloodshed."

"What caused the danger of bloodshed ? and why the necessity of a display of force to prevent it ? I presume you are prepared to prove what you assert. The charge is made by refined Christian ladies, who left the ease and comfort of their far-distant New England homes, to do a heaven-inspired labor of love for the poor ignorant blacks in this benighted land, and their words are as good as their oaths."

"The charge is untrue, notwithstanding," said Mr. Conrad, coldly.

"I presume you can prove it so, sir ?" said the officer, somewhat impatiently.

"Prove it ? Prove that I am not guilty ? Prove a negative ? I shall undertake to do nothing so ridiculous, sir !"

"And you propose to answer with a simple denial, I suppose ?"

"With a simple denial, sir."

"I have agreed, as I told you, that the ladies shall not be required to appear, and I do not deem it necessary that they shall do so."

"Then you must deem it necessary to dismiss this case without more ado, sir."

"Not at all, sir ; I am not required or expected to conform to the usages of civil courts, and my latitude is very great. I could decide this case as it now stands, for you have admitted that your going to the church came near being the cause of riot and bloodshed ; but I shall continue it till Monday ; and as it seems you desire that there

shall be testimony to prove what you admit, I shall order a number of the colored people to appear as witnesses on that day."

"It is not necessary to do so, sir; I have no curiosity to know what the colored people will swear to, and if you will not summon the teachers to appear, and make a sworn statement, I must ask that the case be dismissed."

"On what grounds?"

"On the ground that as there is no charge in proper form, there is really no case."

"But the charge has been made, and it is for *me* to decide as to its being in proper form."

"Does your 'latitude' allow you to accept a gossiping statement as a formal charge?"

"Yes; if I choose to do so; but——"

"Then it is, indeed, very great, and accounts, no doubt, for the great travesty of justice, which is bringing trouble upon the country; and also accounts, doubtless, for the outrage in the name of justice, that was inflicted upon Judge Garnett."

"Outrages, sir!" exclaimed the officer, growing very red in the face. "What do you mean, sir? Garnett struck a freedman who had formerly been in the service of the United States government, sir; and beside he was a blatant old rebel who——"

"He was a weak and almost helpless old man, sir; and was maltreated by a villainous negro who——"

"Were you a Union soldier, sir; or are you a Rebel sympathiser and champion?" asked the officer, hotly.

"I am a sympathiser and champion of any one, sir, who may be helpless under tyranny and outrage."

"Indeed!" said the officer, contemptuously. "Perhaps you could earn the reward offered for information

as to the perpetrators of the outrage upon William Smith !”

“I could give you my own name as one of the witnesses of that ‘outrage.’ ”

“Do you tell me to my face, sir !—You are under arrest, sir !” exclaimed the officer, laying his hand upon a pistol lying on the table. “Do you submit, or shall I call the guard ?”

“It is not necessary to call the guard, sir,” said the young man, taking from his pocket a large envelope and handing it to the officer. “Will you be so good as to read that ?”

The officer drew a paper from the envelope and glanced at it indifferently, but was soon riveted to its contents, and as he read he lost the color which anger had given to his face, until he became quite pale. He continued to look at the paper several moments after his eyes had ceased to follow the lines, and finally looking up, he said, with some embarrassment :

“And you *were* an officer in the Union army ! I beg your pardon, sir, but had you made known that fact, and the nature of *your* business, we should both have been saved unnecessary annoyance. I do not fully understand the reference here made to General Howard—perhaps you will be so good as to explain that—but, of course, the President’s authority is supreme, and if you construe this to be an order, I am ready to comply with it. The office is a very trying and thankless one, in which it is utterly impossible to give satisfaction to either class of the people, or even to one’s self. I have other business offered me in Massachusetts, which will pay equally as well, and which, if a little more confining, will be more satisfactory in other respects.”

“But you would prefer to remain here?”

“My lungs are a little weak, and our surgeon was of the opinion that the climate here might prove beneficial.”

“To what command did you belong?”

“The —— Massachusetts.”

“What division and corps?”

“We were mostly on post and prison duty.”

“Do you not think your prejudices against the Southern white people cause the scales of justice to make false balances sometimes?”

“I have no prejudices, general. I have only conceived it to be my duty to throw the shield and influence of my power over the wards of the nation, and the institutions which have been planted here by the civilization and Christian charity of my section, which, ‘in the very hour of victory threw aside the cartridge-box and appealed to the contribution box to heal the ravages of war.’” *

“‘To heal the ravages of war!’ That will sound well in the ears of the world, but to ‘continue the ravages of war,’ would be a more truthful statement. The government has declared peace, but it seems that New England has not; and I see that the contribution box is likely to do a more fearful work here than was ever done by the cartridge box. Do you really think it was a good thing to do for the former slaves to take advantage of their dazed condition while gazing in awe upon the apparent miracles of accomplished freedom, to seduce their hearts from the sentiments and affections which have heretofore filled the requirements of their natures, and give them instead only the gospel of revenge, and a restless yearning after things that are unattainable, and that would be worse than useless to them if possible to be attained? Was it a

* A statement from “Bricks without Straw.”

good or wise thing to fire their hearts against those for whom they must labor or starve, and to forbid their singing the pious hymns and using the orthodox forms of religion that were taught them by former ministers of the Gospel, because those former ministers did not conceive it to be their duty, or right, to violate the laws of their states and teach more than was taught by the Saviour of mankind?”

“Dat’s so ! dat’s so !” exclaimed Peter, approvingly, having just aroused himself from the dazed condition into which the unexpected turn of matters between the two white men had thrown him.

“But,” said the officer, not noticing Peter’s interruption, “it is worthy of remark that these ministers are not more willing than the other rebels to accord to the colored people their rights.”

“What rights? Have they rights which would not be accorded to them if they were Irish or Germans? I have been in the country some time, and I have yet to see or hear of a negro who has been deprived of any right, unless it be claimed that he has a right to use or appropriate the property of other people without their consent; to insult and abuse them without punishment; to intrude upon those who have heretofore been supposed to have a right to be exclusive if they so desired, with impunity; and to violate the plainest dictates of law and decency, without being whipped of justice! The prejudiced teaching of these mission-school teachers leads the negroes to believe that they have rights which common sense ought to teach them would not be accorded to them if they were white people.”

“Dat’s so ! dat’s so !” interjected Peter.

“Perhaps,” replied the officer, “the teachers here are a

little prejudiced ; but in judging them we should make some allowance for the many and great provocations which they have had to anger and resentment. ‘How did the white brothers and sisters of those messengers of a matchless benevolence receive them ? Ah ! God ! how sad that history should be compelled to make up so dark a record—abuse, contumely, violence ! Christian tongues befouled with calumny ! Christian lips blistered with falsehood ! Christian hearts overflowing with hate ! Christian pens reeking with ridicule because other Christians sought to do their needy fellows good ! No wonder that faith grows weak, and unbelief runs riot through all the land, when men look upon the spectacle. The present may excuse, for charity is kind ; but the future is inexorable and writes with a pen hard nibbed.’ ” *

“What Christian lips are befouled with calumny and blistered with falsehood ? The first greeting of these so-called teachers, to the white people here, was an insult, and every utterance they have made about them as a people is a falsehood and a calumny ! What Christian hearts are overflowing with hate, and what pens are reeking with ridicule ? Go and talk to these ‘messengers of a matchless benevolence’—read their letters, which are being published ‘to manufacture sentiment’ in every city, village and hamlet of the North—and you have your answer ! Hate ! They are the messengers of the evangel of Hate ! It is their gospel ! They preach it ; they teach it ; they live it ! It is personified in themselves ! Charity is kind, but the present will *not* excuse, and the hard-nibbed pen of the inexorable future will make New England civilization ashamed to own them as its own.”

“Dat’s so ! dat’s so !” exclaimed Peter, admiringly.

* This is an extract from “Bricks without Straw.” Page 134.

“Do you know, general,” asked the officer, with a smile, “that the teachers at Bethel have always believed you to be a rebel?”

“Yes ; I have been told that they have used some forcible adjectives in the expression of their disbelief in my loyalty. And I must say, candidly, if the mission-schools, backed as they are by the Freedman’s Bureau, represented fairly the spirit and designs of the government, I should not desire to be considered loyal. I shall ever be loyal to the principles for which I fought, but I fully believe there is not one soldier in a hundred, of the brave men who met these brave people face to face on the field of battle, who, if he could know, as I do, the exact position of affairs here, would not, in his secret heart, regret the part which he took in giving to bigotry and fanaticism the ability to wreak its vengeance upon these crushed and wretched people !”

“You are very severe, general,” said the officer, with a deep flush.

“I expressed similar sentiments to the President, and the letter you have just read serves to indicate whether or no he considered them unmeritedly severe.”

“But he is a Southern man.”

“Yes ; a Southern man whose great love for the Union, prompted him to do what very few men in any land could do ; whose great love for human rights caused him to do what no Northern, and particularly no New England man, would do, surrender to a political necessity thousands of millions of dollars worth of property belonging to himself, his friends, kindred and people. This should prove conclusively that he is a friend to the Union and also to the negro. He is free from any long-cherished animosity, of course, toward his own section ; and

is, therefore, of all men now in power, the one whose feelings and judgment are least influenced by passion, or by any sentiment but an earnest desire for the best welfare of all the country. What his judgment is now, that of all equally intelligent men will be when the blinding influences of passion shall have passed away."

"General," said the officer, gathering up some papers from the table, "I should like to have a talk with you in the private office, about some matters of more than ordinary importance. If you please, we will walk into the back office, where there will be no danger of interruption, and Mr. Dillard can amuse himself with the papers for an hour or so."

As the two gentlemen left the room, Peter listened till he heard them pass through the room next adjoining, and close the second door. Then, throwing himself back on the bench, and stuffing a square yard of red cotton bannanna into his mouth, he indulged in an inward guffaw which swelled the veins of his neck and face, till suddenly the wadded handkerchief flew across the room, like a wad from a pop-gun, followed by an explosion of laughter which shook the window. Springing to his feet, he listened a moment, to see if the explosion had caused an alarm, but hearing no sound from the back office, he ejaculated "Mars' Conrad is done got dat man by de umbellycum cord es sho es you's born!" and hastily cramming the handkerchief into his mouth again, he threw himself at full length upon the bench and shook with laughter. After his silent paroxysm had subsided, he picked up a pictorial paper and commenced looking over the illustrations. He had been intently studying for some time a full-page allegorical caricature representing the President holding back, by the tail of his coat, a United States sol-

dier who was making frantic efforts to fly to the rescue of a forlorn looking negro, kneeling in a mute appeal for mercy to a band of white savages with C. S. A. on their belts, who were preparing to demolish him with rifles, shot-guns, swords and butcher knives; while over the grinning chief magistrate stood the, supposed-to-be invisible form of the Genius of Philanthropy about to chop off his head with a butcher's cleaver, when a voice at the front door, inquired :

“Is de boss o' de Buro at home, sah?”

“Hey?” said Peter, looking suddenly around and discovering a very black man, whose wild eyes were taking a hurried inventory of the furniture and belongings of the room; “What you want, you nappy-headed tar-bucket?”

“Is you de sudgent o' de Buro?”

“How come you don't 'speck I's de boss?”

“I was here yistiddy, sah, an' de boss den was a white gent'man.”

“An' I spose you thinks dat de guv'ment dat could 'ford to set a thousan' million o' you niggers free, an' not charge you a cent, can't 'ford to have two bosses to a county, to keep you from turnin' out tails, an' changin' back to monkeys agin'?”

“Sah!”

“Don't stan' dar wallin' dem eyes like a duck in a thunder storm! What you want? Talk! I's got no valable time to fling away on you!”

“Well, sah; I tuck dat anser de tother boss gin me, to de ole man I's bin wuckin' for, an' he say he see me, an' de Buro, an' de guv'ment, all in hell befo' he pay anoder cent!”

“How much does he owe you?”

“My wife cooked nine munts an' fo' days—but I flings

in de days—an' he 'greed to pay her eight dollars a munt, an' de teacher at Godesville skool is done figgered it out an' she say tis seventy-two dollars."

"How much has he done paid on it?"

"Arter we had de scrimmage he flung my wife seben dollars an' twenty cents, an' say dat's all."

"What was de scrimmage 'bout?"

"Well, de wimmen fokes got into a 'spute 'bout stealin' de sugar an' coffy an' things; an' I was splainin' de matter, tryin' to keep down peace, an' de ole man had to put in his jaw; an' bimeby de lie got to bandyin' about an' den we had it knock down an' drag out! But I got de best o' dat an' I ain't got no fault to find 'cept 'bout de munny."

"Was any o' de red juice drawed?"

"Right smart; but none out o' me."

"Who den?"

"Him."

"How much?"

"Bout a skillet full."

"Where'd you tap 'im?"

"On de smeller."

"Why didn't you tap his pocket too while he was down?"

"Well, dey says dat's one thing dat's agin de law till yet."

"An' is dat all he ever paid you, sho nuff?"

"Clare fore God tis! He flung my wife a five, an' a two, an' two dimes an' say for us to get out o' his yard an' ef we ever come inside agin he'd bust our heads open."

"Kin you prove 'bout de munny?"

"Yes, sah; all de fokes says dey'll swar to it."

"How many witnesses is he got?"

"Not more'n three or fo', an' dey ain't nothin' but white fokses niggers."

"Did tother boss swar you yistiddy?"

"Yes, sah; he swored me on de biges' book in de Buro!"

"An' what you swared to was de troof; was it?"

"Yes, sah; sixty fo' dollars an' eighty cents. Dat's what de skool teacher says. I ain't got no eddycation."

"How's you workin'?"

"Half de crap; an' finds myself."

"How many chil'n is you got?"

"Six."

"How much munny is you got now?"

"Des what he paid yistiddy; seben twenty—but, I forgot, I spent de twenty."

"What for?"

"Tickler o' licker."

"What you done wid all de munny from last year's crap?"

"Didn't have nary cent after Crismus was over."

"Whar did all de munny come from for dat nice new dress you gin your wife in de spring an' de hat, an' shoes, an' ribbins, an things?"

"I didn't give 'em to her; she got 'em herself."

"Where'd she get de munny from?"

"Sah!"

"Yes, tis 'saah!' Where'd all dat munny come from? Don't stan' dar a puckerin' your mouf like you'd done swallowed a green persimmon! Talk!"

"Well, I 'clare I had done clean forgot dem clo's. He did give her fifteen dollars to get dem, an' dat's all; every cent!"

“How about clo’s for you an de chil’n?”

“Sah! Clo’s?”

“Don’t go to tellin’ none o’ your lies here! You’s floppin’ dem lips now tryin’ to get out one! It’s de bisness o’ de Buro to know everything, an’ I’s de boss dat does de knowin’ branch o’ de bisness. Tother boss ain’t wuff much in dat line, but you can’t pass no silver-plated lie on me, an’ don’t you forgit it! Talk up ’bout dem clo’s!”

“Well, you see de ole ’oman begged de ’omen she cooked for out o’ her chiln’s ole clos for my chil’n, an’ dat done for dem; but I did git some close an’ we’ll put down five dollars for dat. I’s glad you ’minded me o’ dat. It makes twenty dollars, an’ leaves forty fo’ an’ eighty cents, don’t it? Gimme a order for dat an’ I’ll be satisfied.”

“Any stos up dat way dat runs on tick?”

“No, sah! It’s cash up an’ de munny down!”

“Whar’d de munny come from to get you rashens?”

“Sah! Rashens?”

“Yes; you bet! Rashens—meat, an’ meal, an’ flour, an’ sugar, an’ coffy, an’ lassess, an’ crackers, an’ sargeens, an’ good things! Don’t stan’ dar battin’ dem eyes like a bull frog wid de belly ache! Ef you tells lies to de Buro you gits your years nailed to de cote house do’, an’ your har swunged off wid a light’ud torch! Talk!”

“Well, sah, you see, my ole ’oman’s bin doin’ de cookin’.”

“Yes, I see; but I speck she couldn’t hook ’nuff for you an’ all dem six chil’n. Talk up! I kin see de holes in your years already an’ smell your naps a fryin’.”

“Rashens! Well, I ’clare to gracious I had done clean forgot dem rashens; an’ I has done forgot how

many he gin me ! But I's willin' to settle for ten dollars. Sen' de sogers up dar an' make him pay me dat an' I'll be satisfied ; but tother boss said ef he 'sputed de 'count o' de skool teacher agin, he'd sen' de sogers up, an' den I'd git de whole sixty fo' dollars an' eighty cents ; an' I'd git it by de witnesses too. But he's a po' man anyhow, an' I'll be stisfied wid de ten dollars.”

Without replying Peter reached across the table for an official blank, and as he had learned to form the letters of his name, he wrote “Peter Dillard” in an awkward scrawl along several of the lines. Then, deliberately folding the paper, he handed it to the man, and spoke in a commanding tone of voice :

“See here, my good feller, we has done turned over a new leaf in dis Buro ; an' 'taint no shop now whar a rogue kin git help to rob a hones' man. All dat is done played out ! Take dis paper to de gent'man you has bin workin' for, an' tell him ef he ever pays you a nother red cent I'll have him 'rested an' make you an' all your family come here an' cook an' work for 'im while he's in jail. An' tell him, arter you 'livers dat order, ef you ever darkens his yard gate agin, an' he don't give you what de I'shman give de drum, wid a busted head flung in, I'll sen' a file o' sogers up dar an' make him hit every nigger in de neighborhood nine an' thirty lashes. An' now, ef you don't 'liver dat note, an' all o' dem messages, straight es a shingle, an' slick es goose grease, I'll make a cote-martial set on you an' mash you es flat es a pancake. You has done hyeared my racket, an' dat racket is like de law o' de Medes an'—dem tother folks, an' don't you forgit it ! Now git up an' git ! You's so black it makes me sleepy, an' I speck all de chickens in town is done gone to roost.”

“ Well, sah ; but——”

“ But your head agin de rock o’ ages ef you want to, but you better lite out from here in a hurry ! ”

“ Yes, sah ; but I’d like to see——”

“ You’ll see de gates o’ glory, or de smoke and brimstone o’ de tother place, wid a ba’net in your haslet, ef you don’t skip from here in less’n half a second ; an’ ef you ever comes back here agin ! March ! Make tracks ! Heel it ! I wonder whar’s dat raskully sudgent o’ de gyards ! Here’s a chance to nail a nigger’s saddle-skyearts to de cote house do’ an swinge off his kinks for swarin’ to a lie, an’ dat sudgent ain’t here ! ”

These vigorous and vehement exclamations started the frightened negro in a quick gait down the street in the direction of the open country. Peter went to the door and gazed after him for a moment, and then with a grunt of self-approval, returned to the paper to laugh over the happy conceit of the “ Harpies ” which, though he did not fully understand it, he knew was a *capital* joke about to be played upon the *Head* of the government.



“ The Head of the Government. ”

CHAPTER XXXI.

A HOLY APPARITION.

•“*No beast of more portentous size,
In the Hercynian forest lies.*”—ROSCOMMON.

“*Hypocrisy, with holy leer,
Sat smiling and demurely looking down,
But hid the dagger underneath the gown.*”

—DRYDEN.

WHILE Peter Dillard was “turning over a new leaf” in the office of the bureau agency, and causing inebriated justice to rub her drowsy and besotted eyes, the two gentlemen were engaged in a conversation which absorbed their entire interest and attention. The officer, having carefully closed the door, drew a chair in front of Mr. Conrad, and remarked :

“I regret very much that we did not sooner become acquainted with each other, as you are in such a position as to be qualified to give most valuable advice with reference to the difficult problem of dealing with the punctilious people of this section, and staying the growing disposition which they evince to protest against what displeases them by acts of secret violence. If I know myself, I would be unwilling to hold this office if I did not feel that I could do justice, as becomes a Christian soldier, to all classes without undue bias. Of course, I cannot ignore the fact, however, that my first duty, and the only one for which the bureau was established and is

continued, is, as I understand it, to promote the well-being, happiness and social advancement of the freedman. Every interest of Christianity and patriotism demands that those who have, for so long, been bowed down under slavery shall be taught, with all possible dispatch, that it is their duty to themselves, their country and their God, to stand up like men, now that we have torn the shackles from their limbs, and assert their manhood and their equal rights. They have much to learn while the white people have much to unlearn. The latter need our teaching, in my opinion, even more than the former, but at present we can only teach them indirectly through the freedmen. They both have to unlearn the past lessons of two centuries, and the task set before the white people is much the more difficult to acquire, because a distasteful one which inflicts torture upon their pride of caste. We may feel pity and compassion for them but we know they must learn their task, and that the quicker it is acquired, the better for them, and for the nation. What a too tender sentiment might regard as wrong, cruelty, oppression, or what not, true philanthropy, in the present position of matters, discovers to be real and intelligent kindness. Their body-politic is covered with leprous sores caused by generations of slavery, and though the touch of the surgeon gives excruciating pain, shall we, on that account, cover the sores with the emollient plaster of a weak sentimentality and an abandonment of the eternal principles of human equality, and leave them to fester and destroy our mendicant neighbor ; or shall we cauterize them and have done with it? Our New England civilization, the healthy physician, who has cured himself of a similar leprosy, orders heroic treatment, and our philanthropy, the truly feeling and tender-hearted hospital

nurse, demands cauterization. This must, of course, cause present pain, but it insures future health and usefulness.

“As regards the acts of mob violence alluded to, you are aware that such acts are not new to the people of the South. You may have heard of two Northern men, Wheelless and Purst, who were sent here as missionaries to the slaves just prior to the war by the united action of various Christian and philanthropic societies of New England. In this county, and not far from where Wheelless now lives, they were beaten with many stripes, and notified that they would be hanged if they ever returned to Alabama. Two Wesleyans were treated in the same manner in North Carolina—torn from the pulpit and beaten, and notified if they ever returned they would be murdered. I could mention some twenty or more such cases, that were less severely punished, all because they wished to do their needy fellow-creatures good. All this indicates a woeful condition of affairs, and the necessity for the intervention and enforced teachings of a higher order of civilization.”

“You have forgotten to mention the case of John Brown, who was sent out by the same Christian and philanthropic societies, and was hanged by and under the laws of Virginia.”

[“Yes ; it is just such intolerance as this that makes it next to impossible, for the South to accept its present situation. The Southern people want to shoot, whip, hang and burn those who do not agree with them. It is all the fruit and outcome of two hundred years of slavery ; in fact, it is part and parcel of it.”

“But you don’t think those men had any right to come here and preach such dangerous doctrines, do you ?”

“Certainly, general ; why not ?”

“Why, it seems to me the most evident thing on earth that every community has an undoubted right to protect itself. That is all they did—protect themselves and their institutions.”

“Protect themselves *against* their institutions more properly. That is the strength of the abolitionist’s position. No community has any right to have, cherish, or protect any institution which cannot bear the light of reason and free discussion.”

“But suppose they do tolerate such an institution, does that give one a right to bring a fire-brand among them ? Are they not the proper judges of what is the correct thing for their own good—the keepers of their own consciences ?”

“It is useless to discuss the matter, general. Excuse me for saying that those are the arguments of intolerance and bigotry in all ages. Even men who are disposed to be liberal-minded are blinded by them. That very argument would justify these people in giving me a flagellation. The principle is the same. By that reasoning they have a right to suppress me by violence, or even by murder, if need be.”

“Oh, not so bad as that !”

“Yes ; as bad as that, and I tell you what it is, general, the most dangerous and difficult element of the future at the South is this irrepressible intolerance of the opinions of others. They deem disagreement an insult, and opposition a crime which justifies any enormity. It will bring bitter fruit and you will see it !”]*

* The portion of this conversation between the brackets is copied from “A Fools Errand”—pages 80–2. The intelligent reader will observe that the champion of incendiary preaching and teaching

“These people are already feeding upon the bitter fruits that have resulted from disagreement being deemed an insult, and opposition a crime, by the philanthropists of your section. The Southern people, as a people, have always been good neighbors. They have never shown a disposition to poke their noses into their neighbors’ affairs, and rattle up and tattle about the skeletons in their closets. If New England burnt witches, they only grieved over her folly and superstition; if she had labor or other riots, and got up crusades against foreigners, they only looked on in silent wonder; and if she developed agrarianism, spiritualism, free-loveism, atheism and other isms which they did not admire, they only wagged their heads, and said one to another, ‘We will have none of this patent civilization!’ They have been willing to allow New England to enjoy her own Christianity and civilization in her own way, and have only been intolerant of her stubborn determination not to grant them the same privilege. They think that they themselves, and not New England, will be held accountable for their sins, and that therefore New England wrongs herself as well as others when she encourages her people to repent of other people’s sins instead of their own. Religious teaching here is very different. It addresses the individual;—

tangles himself up in his arguments until he is forced to “beg the question.” The “light of reason and free discussion” which the author speaks of as having been forbidden in the South prior to the war, was the light which was made to shine only through such philanthropists as John Brown, and only in such secret meetings as he held to plot murder and arson; and the free discussion which was forbidden and severely punished, was the discussion in secret clubs, of the question whether cannon-balls, fire-brands, or arsenic, was the better civilizing agent to be used upon the haughty and scornful barbarians of the South.

separates him from society, and warns him to look into his own heart, and acknowledge and repent of his own sins. It does not make it a custom to rail against the sins of communities and agitate for gigantic reforms,—thus encouraging the individual to ignore the vice in his own heart while he compares his virtues, scant as they may be, with the failings of a community—encouraging him to burn incense to himself upon the altar of uncharitableness, instead of subjecting himself to the humiliation and mortification of repentance; encouraging, fostering and pampering what the people here call Pharisaism.”

“Well, general, respecting the proper course to be pursued toward the white people here, can you tell me what they complain of?”

“They consider that there is no law for their protection. That your will, within very undefined limits, is their law, and that you are prejudiced against them. They see the negroes, who were always before kind and respectful friends, changed to deceitful and treacherous, and often bitter and insulting enemies, and they credit the Freedman’s Bureau and the missionaries with producing the change. They feel that they are at the mercy of the spiteful caprices of any wanton enemy who may choose to attack or prey upon them; and that when attacked, they have only physical force to appeal to with any hope of getting a satisfactory response. So far, they have only retaliated and inflicted such punishment as justice seemed to them to demand. I do not think they will ever do more than this, but I candidly believe they are the only spirited people on the face of the globe who could submit to their many inflictions, crowned by the taunts and wanton insults of an inferior race, without scenes of bloodshed terrible to think of. Many of their leading people

believe that there is a deep design to fire the hearts and passions of the negroes, with a view to forcing the white people into bloody acts of mob violence, which may be construed into, and perhaps ultimately lead really to, revolt against the local authorities of the government. Perhaps they would evince less of Spartan fortitude were it not for this conviction, and a consequent determination to disappoint, what they believe to be, the schemes of a not fully glutted vengeance on the part of their old foes, the ‘philanthropists.’”

“They are uncharitable, general, for I claim to be a philanthropist myself, and I assure you my all-absorbing desire is to keep the country as quiet and orderly as possible. But I think it likely that I have not pursued the wisest course here; and if I shall continue to fill this office, I shall seek to win the personal confidence of the best class of the white people. As regards disturbances, I have a letter here from the principal of the Bethel Mission-School, which, I fear, forebodes trouble for our colored friend in the front office, and several others. It seems that they have a seer there who attends class-meetings, *et cetera*, at the Bethel Church, and sees strange things sometimes. This letter gives one of his visions.”

As the officer spoke, he handed Mr. Conrad quite a lengthy epistle, which he glanced over carelessly till he came to the name of “Uncle Jerry.” He then read:

“After a time Uncle Jerry raised his head, which had all the time been bowed upon his knees since the meeting began, and, lifting his thin hand toward the people, said, in a soft, clear voice,

“‘Let us all kneel down ’an pray,—one mo’ short pra’r—short pra’r!’

“He knelt with his face toward us. The guttered

candle on the rough pine table threw its flickering light over him, as with upturned face and clasping hands, he 'talked with God.' Oh, how simply and directly! And as he prayed, a strange light seemed to come over his brown face, set in its white frame of snowy hair and beard. He prayed for all, except himself, and seemed to bring the cares and troubles of all before the throne of grace, as if he had the key to the heart of each.

"Then he came to pray for us,—'the stranger frens' whom God had raised up, and led in His mysterious way, to do us good,—'bless em', O Lord, in basket and sto', heart an' home. Dey don't know what dey's got afo' 'em. Stay der hans, an' keep 'em strong an' brave!' But I can never reproduce the strange tenderness and faith of this prayer. I leaned my head on ——'s shoulder, and the tears fell like rain as I listened. All at once there was silence. The voice of prayer had ceased, and yet the prayer did not seem ended. I raised my eyes, and looked. Uncle Jerry still knelt at his chair, every worshipper still kneeling in his place, but every head was turned, and every eye was fastened on him. His eyes were fixed—on what! He was looking upward, as if he saw beyond the earth. His face was set in rigid lines, yet lighted up with a look of awful joy. His breath came slowly and sobbingly, but aside from that, not a muscle moved. Not a word was uttered, but every eye was fastened on him with hushed and fearful expectancy.

"Five minutes—perhaps ten minutes—elapsed and he had not spoken or moved. It was fearful, the terrible silence, and that fixed, immovable face, and stony figure. There was something preternatural about it.

"At length there came a quiver about the lips. The eyes lost their fixity. The hands which had rested on the



“One mo’ short Pray’r.”

chair were clasped together, and a look of divine rapture swept across the upturned face, as he exclaimed, in a tone fairly burdened with ecstatic joy :

“ ‘I see Him ! I see *Him* ! Dar he *is* ! ’ and he pointed with a thin and trembling hand toward the further corner of the room. ‘ I see Him wid de crown ob salvation on His head ; de keys ob hebbin a hangin’ in his girdle, God’s keys for de white pearl gates, wid de bres’ plate ob Holiness an’ de mantle ob Righteousness. Dah He is a walkin’ among de candlesticks yit. He’s a comin’ nigh us—bress His holy name ! a lookin’ arter His people an’ a-gatherin’ on ’em in.—Separatin’ de sheeps from de goats ; de lams from de black sheep. He’s turnin’ His back on de black sheep dat whipped Bill Smiff ! He’s frownin’ on de goats dat killed John Colston de soger o’ de Union an’ soger o’ de cross. Ah-ha ! It’s Peter Dillard, Dick Styode an’ two white men,—white men,—black sheep—black sheep an’ goats.’ ”

“ I cannot tell you what a strange rhapsody fell from his lips ; but it ended as it had begun, suddenly and without warning. The glorified look faded from his face. The sentence died midway on his lips. His eyes regained their conscious look, and ran around the hushed circle of attent faces, while a knowledge of what had taken place seemed first to flash upon him. He covered his face with his hands, and sank down with a groan, exclaiming, in apologetic tones :

“ ‘ O Lor’ ! O Lor’ ! Thou knowest the weakness ob dy sarvant ! Spar’ him ! spar’ him ! ’ ”

“ The meeting ended and we went home. Somehow I cannot get over the feeling that that church is place where one has indeed seen God.

“ They told us that Uncle Jerry often had these spells,

as they call them; whenever there was a great battle pending or imminent, during the war, they could always tell which way the fight had gone by what he said in these trances. They say he knows nothing of what he says at such times. I asked him about it to-day. He simply said: 'I can't splain it, missus. 'Pears like it's a cross I hez 'specially to carry. It's made me a heap o' trouble. Bin whipped for it heaps o' times, an' sides dat, I allers feels ez ef I'd lived 'bout ten years when I comes out o' one o' dem spells. Can't understand it, missus, but Uncle Jerry 'll quit in some o' dem spells yit.' " *

"What do you think of it?" asked the officer, as Mr. Conrad laid the letter upon the table.

"It's all very ridiculous, of course," laughed the latter. "I am surprised that moderately intelligent and presumably unsuperstitious people should notice, and thus encourage the wicked and impious antics of the poor ignorant pretender. I have heard before, in a general way, of this fellow's miraculous visions, and the most charitable construction that any sensible person can put on them is that he is crazy. But the general opinion is that he is a shrewd and vicious person who has an inordinate love of notoriety. He made a moderately fair guess as to the punishers of William Smith, but he is entirely off, I think, with reference to the assassination of Colston. Dick Stewart lives on my place and was with Stewart and myself at Huntsville on that night."

"I cannot imagine, general, why, if you thought justice had not been done in the case of Judge Garnett, you did not complain to me. Garnett refused to produce any

* This letter is copied from "A Fool's Errand," pages 88-90. The portion bringing the charge is changed to suit this narrative.

testimony to corroborate his statement because, as he said, only negroes had witnessed the affray, and he was exceedingly arrogant. Smith brought over a dozen witnesses whose testimony was necessarily convincing, because each one told identically the same tale. To be candid, I should have been glad of a good excuse to withhold the punishment which I felt compelled to inflict.”

“ I have not interested myself in minor affairs here,” replied Mr. Conrad, “ because I prefer to put myself exactly in the place of these people, and thus be enabled to judge of my people and of yours, and of the present political questions from their standpoint. But does not your ‘ latitude ’ admit of your considering the characters of the persons who testify before you ? ”

“ Well, hardly,” replied the officer, with some embarrassment. “ I feel that I have a right to know nothing of the people here except what is known by the government, that one class is loyal and the other is not.”

“ Why do you presume, or take it for granted that the white people here are not loyal ? ”

“ How could they be ? ”

“ How could they be otherwise ? They are an honorable, high-minded people, and have pledged themselves to submit to the authority of the government, and mean to keep the pledge, and are keeping it under most trying circumstances. This is passive loyalty, and is all that could be reasonably expected of them just yet.”

“ But they are resentful. They expected the nation to come back to them, when its power was re-established, absolutely unchanged and unmodified. It came back instead with a new impetus, a new life, born of the stormy years that have intervened, putting under its feet the old issues that have divided parties, scornful of ancient states-

manship, and mocking the graybeards who have been revered as sages in the 'good old days of the Republic.' ”*

“Does what you say represent fairly the sentiments of your people and party? Has the nation really come back with an impetus born of anything but the organic law, which alone makes it a lawful government, and entitles it to the loyalty of any citizen of any state? Is it truly scornful of ancient statesmanship—the statesmanship which reared it from a little group of weak and ununited communities to be one of the first nations of the globe? Does it indeed mock the graybeards whose wisdom and patriotism made fanaticism ashamed and afraid to rear its hideous head until they had disappeared from the earth? While we who loved the Union fought to preserve it, have those who made it a tool to punish their foes—the people to whom they ‘sold slaves for the love of gold,’ and from whom they wished to ‘steal them back for the love of God’—really subverted the government?”

“Of course, the government has not been subverted, but it has achieved—won by force of arms, if we choose so to express it—a solidity, a strength and power, an authority which the timidity of the original colonies—those in particular which we have recently conquered—feared to entrust it with at the first formation of the government. If we do not mean that the government shall be insidiously robbed of this new life and strength and authority we must keep the so-called conservatism of these people from acquiring any influence in our politics. We must wipe out all former state lines and make the South one vast military department, or give it only territorial government, at least, for many years to come. But

*This sentiment is from “A Fool’s Errand,” page 126.

if we were ever so anxious to rehabilitate these former states we must “recognize as an undeniable fact the idea that men who have gazed into each other’s faces, over gleaming gun barrels, by the fateful blaze of battle, are not so fit to adjust the questions arising out of the conflict as those yet unborn.” *

“If what you suggest is possible of accomplishment, then, indeed, the government has been subverted ; or, if not so, its accomplishment would be the virtual subversion of the government. As regards those ‘who have gazed into each other’s faces over gleaming gun-barrels, by the fateful blaze of battle,’—if they could be left to ‘adjust the questions arising out of the conflict,’ there would be immediate peace, prosperity and good government in the South ; and, in good time, more cordial relations between the Northern people, generally, and those of the South, than have existed since the South succeeded in having the African slave trade declared piracy by the laws. All brave people respect those who prove themselves possessed of like qualities of courage, even though the proof may have been exhibited in warfare against themselves ; and there is nothing easier or more natural, or that gives more sincere pleasure to the truly brave, than to accept the hand of friendship when offered by a chivalrous and honorable foe. The great trouble is, that those who have *not* gazed into each other’s faces over gleaming gun-barrels, *et cetera*, have taken upon themselves the task of ‘gathering and securing the fruits of victory,’ of ‘making treason odious,’ and of ‘punishing the rebel traitors.’ The questions properly ‘arising out of the conflict’ have been adjusted—were adjusted by the

* The latter portion of this speech is from “A Fools Errand,” page 116.

surrender of the Confederate armies, and by the recognition of the binding effect of the emancipation proclamation."

"Would you have rebellion to go unpunished? It is true, the South has lost—lost her men, her money, her slaves; but that was only a gambler's stake, the hazard placed upon the dice. There is talk of 'making treason odious.' How that result shall be accomplished is a serious question; but how to make it *honorable*, I fear we will find an easy matter to demonstrate. The North is simply a conqueror; and, if the results she fought for are to be secured, she must rule as a conqueror. Suppose the South had been triumphant, and had overwhelmed and determined to hold the North? Before now, a thoroughly-organized system of provisional government would have been securely established. There would have been no hesitation, no subterfuge, no pretence of restoration, because the people of the South are born rulers,—aggressives who, having made up their minds to attain a certain end, adopt the means most likely to secure it. In this the North fails. She hesitates, falters, shirks."*

"Yes, the North hesitates more than is pleasing to the philanthropic spirits of New England, and their admirers in other sections. She fears to give herself up, in times of peace, too fully to the guidance of that eccentric spirit which, in the past, was wont to declare the Constitution, written and established by the 'graybeards,' who, you say, are now 'mocked,' to be an 'inspired instrument,' or a 'covenant with hell,' as best suited its interests or passions at the time. The result for which I, and people like me, fought, was a restoration of the Union, simply.

* From "A Fool's Errand," page 153.

This was claimed to be the only object of all parties, until the highly-excited passions of the people made it safe for the fanatics to unfold their real designs by slow degrees. Had they done this in the beginning, they would have been left to fight their own battles, and, of course, there would have been no war. The Confederacy would have been fully established, and after a time would have proposed to form a new Union with the intermeddling section left out, and the North would have accepted the proposition.* As regards ‘treason,’ it is always odious, but it would be difficult to show that these people have been guilty of treason, except toward that spirit, and those people, who are ‘scornful of ancient statesmanship,’ and who ‘mock the graybeards who have been venerated as sages’ in the past. Such treason as that, you will find to be a distinguishing characteristic of all true patriots of the present day, and of the days to come. If the South had overwhelmed the North she would have received us, had affiliation and union been mutually desired, with open arms, as soon as the North had frankly and fully repudiated the heresy that the Government, the creature, is superior to the States, the creators, and can exercise other powers than those delegated to it by the States, without becoming a law-breaker and usurper. In that event the South would, doubtless, have objected to New England, and would have treated her as the philosopher did the fly—opened the window and told her to go, as the world was large enough for both to live apart and be happy, according to their very dissimilar instincts.”

Farther conversation was cut short by the sudden entry of Peter Dillard, with a startling announcement.

* A suggestion similar to this was seriously discussed by the *New York Herald* in the Spring of 1861.

Peter had been laughing over the thought of what a supremely enjoyable double joke the Nast-y artist of the "Harpies" could have made, had he possessed a sufficient refinement of prophetic wit to picture his stalwart form still farther in the background, with his four-pound hammer about to come into violent contact with the concave locality of the bump of philo-progenitiveness on the not very substantial-looking skull of the Genius of Philanthropy, when the door was suddenly thrust open, and a tall, wiry, wild-eyed white man, possessed, apparently, of great physical strength, exclaimed, with a dramatic air and gesture :

"Ho ! thou sable disciple of Ganymede ! thou ebon son of Nox and Erebus, whose livery declareth thee a screamer with the Bird of Freedom, and yet a brayer and a howler with the jackasses and jackalls behind the throne, tell me where squatteth the Grand Mogul of the Bureau !"

"Sar !" exclaimed Peter, drawing back and gazing at the intruder with open-eyed amazement, not unmixed with a feeling of apprehension, "Put it a *leetle* bit plainer, boss !"

"Angels and ministers of grace, defend us ! Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned ;—bringeth thou airs from Bethel or blasts from hell ? Did thy soul take its flight from the halls of the Atheneum, or shall I speak to thee as to one in the flesh, and call thee—Peter Dillard ?"

"Yes, boss, dis is me !" said Peter, sorely perplexed and somewhat alarmed by the weird appearance and unusual address and manner of the stranger, "I'se de same ole Peter Dillard, 'live an' kickin' ; but you has de 'vantage of me."

“He that hath the advantage, and keepeth it not, is an adolescent idiot ! Do you hear that Peter Dillard-in-the-flesh ? Ah ! I could a tale unfold whose slighest word would harrow up the fallow lands of your nature, and cause each particular kink of your knotted and combined locks to stand on end like spikes upon the ancient hackles of Egypt ! But tell me were lurketh, or where croucheth in his lair, the facile truckler to the powers that be whose mad antics before high heaven make Rome howl ?”

“Yes, boss ; I’ll see de cap’n ’bout it !” responded Peter, suddenly rising and going unbidden into the back office.

“Mars’ Conrad an’ cap’n,” he said, addressing both gentlemen with some excitement of manner, “dar’s a crazy Dutchman, or some sort o’ outlandish fokes, in tother room, says he’s gwine to make things howl !”

“Ha ! here you are,” said the stranger, suddenly opening the door, which Peter had closed, and advancing to the middle of the room, “Which one of you white-faced men is the agent of the Bureau for freedmen, abandoned lands and other loose property ? I have come to look after some abandoned lands ; two plantations in this county abandoned by one, Fred. Deaderick, a philanthropical, hypocritical, Puritanical whelp, and now claimed by Dead Frederick who sprang, Phoenix-like, from the bleached bones of the former, but who roams the earth a reformed Puritan, and as wild a rebel as ever went crazy on the battle-field !”

“Why, Mars’ Deaderick,” said Peter, seizing the stranger’s hand, and shaking it vigorously, “I’s glad to see you ’live an’ kickin’—bless de Lawd, I is ! I thought de wild beasts had done picked your bones !”

“So they did, Peter—so they did ! When your vitals

were punched out with a bayonet, and Fox was crucified, my brains were beaten out with muskets. We have come back to lift our arms again in defense of the helpless, but where is Fox !” Is Stewart living ?”

“ Yes, sar ; he’s at ‘ De Oaks ’ to-day.”

“ ‘ The Oaks ! ’ Has it been resurrected too ? They burnt up my two places, and didn’t even leave ashes enough for a resurrection. But Wheeless has built some huts. Did either of you white-faced men,” he asked, suddenly turning to the others, “ know, or even hear of, one Fred. Deaderick ? ”

“ I may claim that honor,” said Mr. Conrad, arising and offering his hand, “ I am Frank Conrad, a friend to Stewart, and who lives with him at ‘ The Oaks.’ I have often heard him speak of you.”

“ Then he spoke of a canting Pharisaical rip,” said the other, clasping the extended hand, “ who now as a resurrected rebel, seeks the friendship of all true cavaliers. Does not Stewart intend to redeem this country ? Can a Caucasian live in it much longer unless his liver is as white as his face ? Is not Beelzebub dethroned, and have not his imps attacked this upper world ? Does Stewart know that Wheeless, the arch embodiment of treason to all that is dear to civilization and Christianity, the facile imp of the Prince of Evil, is holding high carnival in the land ? Didn’t I myself go to order all interlopers off my land and find him there, the chief of the interlopers ; and didn’t he set his imps on me, until, like Samson of old, I slew a thousand of the vile Philistines with the jaw-bone of a broken wheelbarrow ! Is this the agent ? ” he asked, turning to the officer.

“ Yes ; ” replied Mr. Conrad, “ Let me introduce you to my friend Captain Swinton. The captain has a diffi-

cult office to fill, but he will do all in his power to keep the country quiet, and to promote the ends of justice.”

“Swinton? Captain Swinton?” repeated the eccentric intruder, “And your name is Conrad and you live at ‘The Oaks.’ I shall come to see you and Stewart to-morrow, and now good-bye, if you will excuse me and leave me with Swinton. I have business with him—much and serious business. Don’t think me rude or giddy-headed. They did accuse me of being giddy-headed in Virginia, and sent me to prison among as jolly a lot of bummers and deadbeats as ever followed the swamp angel bell-wether from Atlanta to the sea. I thought the object was to get possession of my cotton in New York. But when they turned me out I went to New York and found the cotton all right—sold in sixty-five for eighty-seven cents per pound. Less than three thousand bales netted more than one million dollars—think of a cool million all in clean cash in the banks of New Orleans and New York! Nothing light or giddy about that, eh? I want to become the largest cotton planter in the world. I want to run this county, with the highest government official I can hire to boss the niggers in the cotton fields. Good-bye, Conrad, I like you. Peter Dillard, adieu; meet me at ‘The Oaks’ plantation to-morrow. I mean to give you a section of land—close the door after you and shut the outer door.”

Mr. Conrad yielded pleasantly to the humor of the eccentric man, and, after a few minutes private conversation with Captain Swinton, he and Peter Dillard set out on their return home.

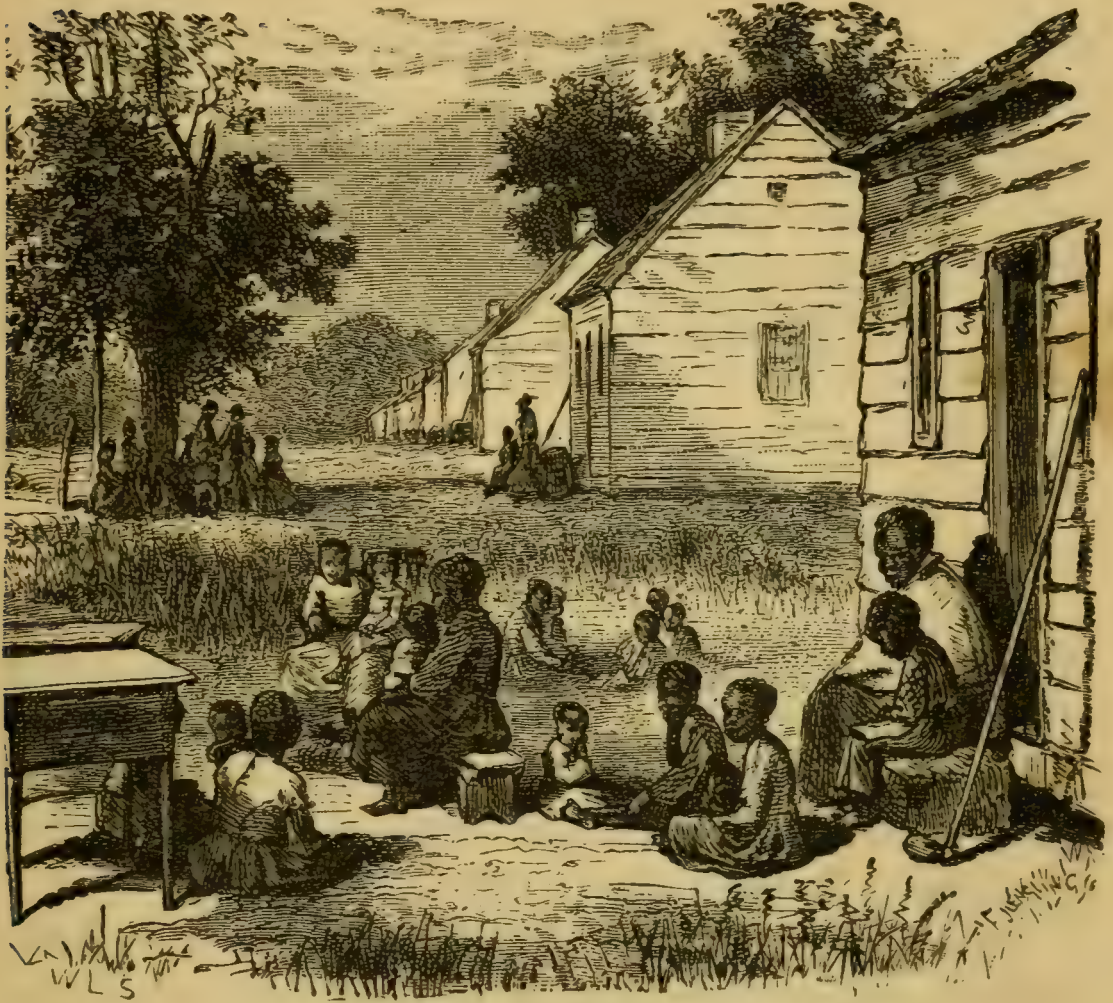
“Mars’ Conrad,” said Peter, after he had had a full account from that gentleman of the “vision” at Bethel, “I did help to put dat nigger Colston out’n de way, an’

I don't keer who knows it now. Jestis is jestis, an' I sticks up to dem dat sticks up to me. Dat boy's pa done me a big favor once. It was at his gate de Coclutch sper-rits drapped me one night befo' de war—dat time I has told you 'bout—an' he couldn't bin better to me ef I had belonged to him; took me in de house an' gin me a good breakfus, an' den put me on his hoss an' walked by my side, cause he didn't have but one hoss, for more'n ten miles, cause he said I was too used up to walk dat fur, an' he gin me a heap o' good edvice, too, an' he was always a good fren' arter dat. I don't 'sider dat I done anything wrong when I helped to kill dat murderer, but I can't tell who tothers was."

"And you must not tell others that you were one of the party, Peter," said Mr. Conrad, seriously. "If it should come to Captain Swinton's knowledge, he would be compelled to arrest you and have you tried for murder. Although you only meted out justice, in the eyes of law, both civil and military, your party were guilty of crime. Besides, that man Colston had friends, and you should think of the possibility of their doing for their friend what you helped to do for yours. When people take the law into their own hands, even if they mete out only justice, they are likely to find that they have been handling a two-edged sword. You are already suspected by those who believe in Jerry Hunt's 'visions,' and you have infinitely more to fear from the lawless violence of your own race, than from Swinton and any civil or military process. The merest travesty upon a court of law requires some evidence, but a 'vision,' I fear, will be deemed ample evidence against you by the Bethel mob and their superstitious advisers."

Peter pondered over these words for a moment, and

then replied, "All right Mars' Conrad, I'll take your edvice. Dem Bethel fokes is tryin' to git above de Buro



"Peace and Home."

an' I wants to keep peace wid all de worl'. But dey mustn't try to put too much on Peter Dillard, an' den try to rub it in."

CHAPTER XXXII.

“KNIGHTS OF THE LOST CLAN” VERSUS “FELLOWS OF THE RED-STRING GANG.”

*“There’s naught so sacred with us but may find
A sacrilegious person.”*—JOHNSON’S NEW INN.

*“A settled virtue
Makes itself a judge, and, satisfied within,
Laughs at that common enemy, the world.”*

—DRYDEN’S RIVAL LADIES.

“STEWART,” said Mr. Conrad, to that young gentleman, when he met him the next morning after his return from a visit to Messrs. Howard, Flournoy and others, with the former of whom he had spent the night. “Who is Jerry Hunt?”

“He is a man whom we will have to look after,” replied the young man; “do you know he accuses several of us of murder?”

“How do you know that?” asked Mr. Conrad, with some surprise.

“Oh, you know the Abolitionists used to run the underground railroad in this country, and we’ve learnt the trick. Besides, their secret cabals called ‘prayer-meetings,’ *et cetera*, are not so exclusive and particular now as they were before the war. Then we held the teachers of incendiarism responsible, but now we cannot, and they are less cautious. By the by, Howard, Flournoy and other friends will be here to-day, and we desire to have you join an

organization which we are about to resurrect and endow with a new significance.”

“What are its objects?”

“The preservation of civilization and the protection of life, person and property.”

“Tell me all about it?”

“Let me say first that you are already a member of an organization that is older than the Christian religion, as old as the headstone of the corner in Solomon’s Temple, and modern research leads us to believe as old as the Pyramids of Egypt, if not ante-dating even the Tower of Babel. This new organization has objects in view somewhat similar to and fully as worthy as those which first actuated that. Being assured of this, I desire to have you receive all that I may say into your safe keeping as a brother. Will you so receive it?”

“I will.”

“Thanks. It is our desire to have every cool-headed and thoroughly reliable man in the land, who is determined to have peace and order re-established, to join us. If, as is undeniably the case, we are forced to resort to violence to protect life and property, and intimidate the vicious, it is better that we shall have a powerful organization, governed by rigid laws, than to suffer each individual, who shall be wronged or outraged, to redress his own grievances, or have them redressed by angry friends. The angry passion of an outraged individual, or community, is not the proper tribunal before which to bring alleged offenders for trial, though at present that is the only one to which we can resort with any hope of having justice meted out. If this shall continue, one year will not elapse before we shall have a pandemonium in the South. Every act of violence, whether of wrong,

or in the interest of justice, will lead to new acts of violence, and soon the land will flow with blood ;—every man will carry his life in his hand and his law in his pistol pocket. Justice, in order to strike without the fear of being struck in return, must be backed by the dignity of lawful authority, or else must protect itself under the *Ægis* of secret organization. The former we cannot have, the latter we can.”

“How is this organization to be worked and how governed?”

“Pretty much as our army was governed and worked—one chief commander for each state, several division commanders, and a camp commander for each county, with officers for subdivisions all the way down to chiefs of ten. The unanimous vote of ten, sitting as a court, with its chief as judge-advocate, will decree and execute slight punishments, but a death sentence is to be pronounced only by the regularly organized court-martial of a camp, and must have the approval of the division commander.”

“How is a death sentence to be executed?”

“The chief commander will designate a camp for that duty, and the camp designated will determine the time and method of execution. But in all cases the method shall be only by hanging if possible; yet cases may arise in which that method might be deemed impracticable, and in that event, a three-fourths vote of the camp charged with the duty may determine that the culprit shall be shot to death. But under no circumstances is the death penalty to be inflicted in any other than one of these two methods.”

“Will the accused have an opportunity to defend himself?”

“ He will be defended by an advocate appointed by the chief commander of the state or district, but he will never know that he has been tried.”

“ Is there not danger that innocent persons may be made to suffer ? ”

“ Not more, I think, than in ordinary courts. Unlike them, we may keep a case on trial a month or a year, if deemed necessary, in order to clear away all doubt ; and the accused during all this time will be shadowed and kept under the eye of the court, so to speak, until his guilt is made clear. Taking all of the precautions and restrictions which are to be adopted, into consideration, I think there is little or no danger that any innocent man will be made to suffer.”

“ What are the laws ? ”

“ The laws for our own control and government you will have in good time. Those for the punishment of crime, no matter by whom committed, are as old as the civilization of the Jews,—‘ An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth ; ’ and no man is to be deprived of life except for murder or a worse crime. In other words, we shall enforce the criminal codes of our state laws as they were when we had states and laws.”

“ Will colored people be admitted into the organization ? ”

“ Under certain conditions and restrictions, yes. In forming a camp, fifty leading citizens, on whose good faith we can certainly rely—you understand me—and who are possessed of cool and clear heads, will be selected and organized. But after organization it will be a penal offense for any member to solicit an individual, or even to betray to his wife, son, brother or other person, any knowledge of the existence of such an organization.”

"How, then, will you extend and enlarge the order?"

"Fifty men in each county will be enough to inaugurate the good work, and after its fruits shall have been seen men will naturally express their views and sentiments freely; and in common conversation will make the only possible application, and at the same time indicate their worthiness, or the reverse, to become members. Those deemed to be worthy applicants will be vouched for, voted for and elected, if elected, before they have an idea that they know a member of the order. After election a suitable pretext will be made by some friend to take the individual to some certain place after dark, and when they arrive there he will suddenly find himself in the midst of mystery."

"What number of adverse votes will reject a proposed member?"

"The vote must be unanimous, but if there shall be only one black ball the case may be reconsidered on the next moon."

"And the punishments to be inflicted are not to be directed solely against the negro race?"

"They are to be directed against any perpetrator of wrongful acts, be he white or black, friend or foe, ex-President Davis or General U. S. Grant."

"Why did you not couple Grant's name with Lee's?" asked Mr. Conrad, with a smile.

"Because," replied the young man, with a slight flush, "it is so utterly impossible to imagine that General Lee could do any act of wrong."

"My friend," laughed Mr. Conrad, slapping his companion heartily on the shoulder, "I shall join your organization. The former followers, and present worshipers of Lee, I feel sure, will never be wittingly

accessory to unmanly acts of petty spite or vengeance. Now, answer my question and tell me of Jerry Hunt."

"He is an old negro preacher, so called, who aids and abets the messengers at Bethel and the 'Missionary' Wheelless in their secular and spiritual enterprises, and was formerly a slave to old Parson Elliott of blessed memory. In his young days he is said to have been a very bad man, but the good old parson converted him, and thought, no doubt, he had added another gem to his crown when he made him an exhorter, or kind of lay-preacher. His influence with the colored people grew to be very great before the war, but in time he became a prophet or seer—had strange visions, which, as they had reference only to neighborhood gossip, frequently made serious trouble amongst the negroes. After a time he commenced to blend the weird rites and ceremonies of Voodooism with the worship of God, and was finally silenced and forbidden to hold so-called religious meetings. This degradation caused him to lose his influence over the minds of the negroes, and only a few months were necessary to cause all of his dupes to become heartily ashamed of their half-unconscious apostacy from the true religion. When the Freedman's Bureau Agency was established in North Alabama he came to the front again, and now no bureau agent in the state is half so much of an oracle, or autocrat, with the negroes as he."

"Is he a bad man?"

"Does that not go without saying?"

"Yes, but I mean is he actively so. Is he aggressive; can he lead a mob?"

"I know but little of him, except from hearsay. He has begun to have visions again as of old; and the negroes, as there is now no one to whom they will listen

to expose his hypocrisies and rascalities, believe in his visions as fully and unreservedly as you and I do in the teachings of revealed religion, and it is said even the “Messengers of Peace,” at Bethel, who, I presume must be instructed at least in the fundamental principles of Christianity, also believe in them, or pretend to do so.”

“I have no doubt, indeed I have had positive proof that they do believe in them fully. But this is not to be wondered at. Fanaticism and superstition naturally belong together. The former is to the latter what chivalry is to courage, its refined essence and natural outgrowth. But this Jerry Hunt, as you seem to be aware, accuses you and me and our body-guards, as Peter and Dick have dubbed themselves, of murder. Can he secretly work us any hurt?”

“I fear so. The Union League, Red-String Gang, and other secret oath-bound organizations, to which no known friend of the white people—and no secret friend, unless he chooses to commit perjury and jeopardize his life—can gain admittance, give to vicious persons of his class almost unlimited power and opportunities for evil. The negroes are learning the lesson given them very rapidly and thoroughly, and their minds are being led to that degree of hatred which will make the destruction of our lives and property, and the perpetration of revolting crimes against the person, seem to them laudable objects of ambition. Already we have submitted to insults, jibes and taunts from the worst of them, till forbearance has ceased to be a virtue, and is construed, and taught to be, cowardice or abject fear of the power of the government as exercised by the Freedman’s Bureau. As to this Jerry Hunt, he hates us and all Southern white men, and he must be made to know that ‘nature’s first law’ has

reared itself above the Freedman's Bureau and the Union League.”

“Yes, it is necessary, but, more of that anon. Here comes my eccentric acquaintance of yesterday—‘Dead Frederick,’—quite an oddity.”

As the young man spoke, Mr. Deaderick, having alighted and hitched his horse, approached with rapid strides up the gravel walk. Seeing Mr. Stewart at the window, he touched his hat and shouted: “Hello, my lord: noble Earl of Monteith—but a collateral kinsman of the betrayer of the noble Wallace—I waft you a glad greeting. ‘The tomb has oped her ponderous marble jaws,’ and sent me to fret again upon the stage of life.”

“Deaderick, my dear fellow,” said Mr. Stewart, heartily, meeting him at the door and warmly shaking his hand, “the tomb purges of all dross; I am delighted to welcome you to Alabama and to my house.”

“Not Deaderick, sir—how are you, Conrad; come and shake hands, old fellow—No, not Deaderick! That canting Puritan had the life beaten and kicked out of him at the Atheneum some years ago by his gentle and philanthropic kinsmen, and he arose from the dead free from the dross of Pharisaism and every other ‘ism,’ and now stands before you a purified—not sanctified, mark you—a purified dare-devil of a cavalier. Oh, that Fox, too, would come back from the spirit land and admit me into the Lost Clan of Cocletz! The harvest is plentiful, but the reapers are—*non est*.”

“Come in, old fellow, and give an account of yourself; I am truly glad to see with my own eyes that you are alive and well,” said Mr. Stewart, placing his hand on the new-comer's shoulder and leading in the direction of the parlor.

“No, not in there!” exclaimed the evidently excited man, “take me into your sanctum-sanctorum. I am mad with a fierce joy—big with an ungodly glee! Chain me to some Promethean rock, for I have stolen fire from the sulphurous flames of hell. I met Wheeless an hour ago; red murder was in his eye, and now his foul blood soils my hands, while the horrified shriek of his soul as it sank into the pit of impenetrable blackness still rings in my ears.”

“Calm yourself, my dear fellow,” said Mr. Stewart, putting his arm soothingly around the now phrenzied man and gently urging him toward a bed-room on the first floor. “There is no blood on your hands, and I feel quite sure you have committed no murder.”

“Murder! No! The strangling of a prowling hyena—the crushing of a hissing adder is no murder! Ah! if Fox were only here with his lively spirits of the Lost Clan! Who says that he is dead? Who saw him crucified? Cannot he arise from the dead? Ha!” he added, suddenly springing from the bed on which he had thrown himself, “I have an idea! I will take up his cross! His spirit shall again ride upon the whirlwind! His voice, through my lips, shall shout the Islamic salutation, the ‘Salaam Aleickoom;’ which benighted tradition expects to hear from holy lips amid the cypress-crowned hills of Jerusalem, over the lonely and forgotten graves of the battle-torn dead of this land, causing them to spring, in fulfillment of the tradition, ready armed and equipped, to drive back the whelming tide of anarchy and barbarism! I have more than a million of money in New Orleans, and I shall go there to-night on the eight o’clock train. I shall buy out the Mardi Gras’ grotesque and fearful masquerade. The resurrected hosts which

will respond to my ‘Salaam Aleickoom’ shall animate the defunct shells of the ‘Mystic Crew’! I shall be their ‘Grand Cyclops’ with a patent elastic backbone that will enable me to tower above the forests and gaze with my defiant orb into the blood-shotten eyes of reckless and defiant barbarism!”

“My eccentric and imaginative friend,” said Mr. Stewart, laughingly pressing his visitor back upon the bed, as he heard footsteps in the hall, “lie there and con over your poetic and gorgeous idea. I have some business to attend to for a short time, but will return when I think you have had a quiet nap.”

The sound of footsteps he found to have been made by the arrival of Howard, Flournoy and other gentlemen of the country around. After greeting the new-comers and carefully closing the parlor door, he was about to draw down the blinds, when Mr. Conrad exclaimed: “Here comes our sable Hercules, Peter Dillard. He has an appointment to meet our eccentric friend, Deaderick, here. Perhaps,” he added, with an inquiring look at Mr. Stewart, “he had better wait an hour or so.”

“Yes,” replied the latter, throwing up the sash and addressing his colored friend. “Good afternoon, Peter; Mr. Deaderick is here, but he is asleep just now and cannot see you. I shall have to ask you to wait an hour at mammy’s house, where the old woman will be glad to have you chat with her.”

As Peter disappeared around the corner of the house, the sash and blinds were drawn down, and the secret cabal was begun from whose broodings over the dragon’s teeth of misdirected and vindictive philanthropy were to spring a ‘hydra brood’ of weird and eccentric spirits whose mad antics before the pale moon were destined soon to convulse

a world of ‘grinning mad-caps’ with laughter ; and later, to phrenzy the long-visaged Pharisaism temporarily predominant in one-half of the ‘Nation,’ with an increased and more unreasoning thirst for vengeance.

The consultation had continued about an hour, when there was a tapping at the side window, and Mr. Stewart on going to it was addressed by Peter Dillard :

“Young master, dars trouble ahead ! I has just heard dat dar was a scrimmage ’twixt Mr. Deaderick and dat Wheelless dis mawnin’, an’ dat Mr. Deaderick busted his head an’ lef’ him for dead ; an’ here comes a whole gang of niggers wid dat sneakin’ Jerry Hunt in de lead, and I’s feared dey’s gwine to make trouble. De niggers is gittin’ so rampageous now dat even de ‘Buro’ law is too slow for ’em.”

“Oh, I guess there is no danger of trouble, Peter,” replied the young man, laughing, but looking anxiously down the east road. “Mr. Deaderick is under the protection of *my* roof, and you know ‘soft words save broken bones.’ ”

“Well, sah,” replied the negro, “es you aint oneasy, an’ es it ain’t none o’ my funeral, an’ es de Scriptor says, ‘dem dat passes by an’ meddle wid strife what don’t belong to ’em, ketches a mad dog by the years,’ I’ll go back to mammy’s house. But ef you wants me, all you got to do is to fetch one holler, and Peter ’ll be dar !”

“Be sure you don’t come before I ‘fetch one holler,’ Peter ; but stay quietly with mammy,” said Mr. Stewart, as the negro disappeared around the corner.

“Gentlemen,” said he, to his companions, after looking out of the front window and seeing some fifty or sixty negroes passing through the lower gate with something like military order, “I go alone to meet the mortals

whose material presence I scent upon the air. Let no phantom clansman,” he added, with a laugh, as he turned to close the door, “dare to reveal his immaterial and ghoulish form till I do cry ‘*Kuklos*’ !”

“Good afternoon, my men,” he said to the rabble, meeting them at the steps of the portico, “what can I do for you?”

“You kin keep from calling us ‘my men,’” responded a stout negro, who appeared to be about fifty years of age, and wore a scowl on his countenance, “an’ ’dress us as ‘gent’men.’”

“Beg pardon, Mr. Hunt; I stand corrected. What can I do for you, gentlemen?”

“We wants Fed Deaderick.”

“We wants de dam son of a rebel hound you calls Deaderick.”

“We wants de debbil’s whelp dat knocked Mr. Wheelless in de head,” shouted twenty voices from the ranks.

“Is Wheelless seriously hurt?” asked Mr. Stewart.

“Yes. *Mister* Wheelless is hurt bad, an’ we didn’t come here to parlarver wid you nor nobody else,” responded Jerry Hunt, looking around for encouragement. “We come arter Deaderick, an’ we means to have him, dead or ’live; an’ you better stan’ out’n de way o’ de law, an’ not be tryin’ to put on no gran’ ars like you could do somethin’ big.”

“I hope you don’t object to my airs,” said the young man, laughing.

“What is you more’n one man?” asked the angry negro. “We has es much right to put on ars es you has. We’s es good es you or mister any-body-else. But we didn’t come here to parlarver;—fetch out dat Dead-

erick, or we's gwine to tramp over everything in de way an' git him.”

“ What right have you to suppose Mr. Deaderick to be here ? ” asked Mr. Stewart, with a view of parleying. “ And if he were here what right have you to demand that I shall give him up to you ? ”

“ What right ! Dat's good ! Ain't we all free-borned 'publican citizens of de Union League of Ameriky ? We has de right to do anything dat 'sports de law an' brings jestis on de heads of——”

“ Look here, white man,” interrupted a burly fellow from the ranks, “ no lyin' ain't gwine to save dat feller. Ain't yonder his hoss hitched to de rack, an' is we blin' ? Come, boys, do yer do——”

“ Yes ! ” shouted Jerry Hunt, “ come on ; we's gwine to have him ef we has to wade throo' blood ! Go in, men, go in ! ”

“ Hold, Jerry Hunt ! ” exclaimed Mr. Stewart, with a steely light in his eyes. “ This is my house—my castle. You may think there is no law in the land, but you do not know what power may lie in my single right arm.”

“ Yes, I do,” responded the negro, hotly. “ I knows all about you, and I don't know no good. I knows you's de rebelest rebel in de country ; an' dat you harbors mos' all de mean niggers an' low-down rebel cusses in de land. I know you's de feller dat 'sults our skool teachers and 'buses our preacher ; I know dat you aiged Peter Dillard an' tothers on to kill dat nigger soger, an' do more'n half de devilment dat has bin done ; and I knows dat your day is comin', *ef'taint already come*, es sure es I knows dat we's gwine to swing Peter Dillard at de en' of a rope befo' de nex' new moon. Come on, men ! Charge over de rebel cuss ef he don't—— ”

At this instant, Mr. Stewart heard a suppressed roar behind him, which sounded like the growl of a hungry tiger to which a piece of flesh had been thrown; and turning quickly, he beheld Peter Dillard, with glaring eyes and carrying an axe in his hand, approaching rapidly along the hall on tip-toe in his stocking feet, as if all unconscious that he was visible to the fifty or sixty pairs of eyes fixed on him in startled amazement. As he glided quickly past Mr. Stewart, the young man seized the axe, hoping to wrest it from the infuriated giant; but it was snatched away as from the feeble efforts of an infant, and the next moment a blow with the fist was dealt Jerry Hunt, who had advanced half way up the steps, which lifted him from his feet and threw him back upon the heads and shoulders of his companions who were crowded closely around.

“Gwine to swing Peter Dillard from the en’ of a rope, is you?” he roared, as he swung the axe around his head, causing the negroes to fall back so rapidly as to knock down and trample over each other; “You sneaking hell-hounds—wants my blood, does you! Great God! ef t’want for leaving carron in de young marster’s yard I’d soak dis axe in a bushel o’ brains!”

At the moment that Mr. Stewart attempted to gain possession of the axe, the scuffling caused the gentlemen in the parlor to suppose that an assault had been made, and they all suddenly rushed upon the scene. Seeing the position of affairs, some of them seized Peter Dillard, fearing that his passion might cause him to shed blood; while others turned to meet Mr. Deaderick as he rushed from his room with a heavy fire-poker in his hand.

“Ho, my lords!” he exclaimed, with a mock-tragic air; “what loud alarm called me from the land of dreams; and

‘ Why stand you thus amazed,
As if you souls had suffered an eclipse
Betwixt your judgments and your passions ? ’ ”

Then, seeing the panic-stricken negroes crowding through the gate, he added : “ What sought those fleeing Philistines ? ”

“ Dey come arter you, Mars’ Deaderick,” shouted Peter, with a hoarse laugh, “ an’ here lays one of ’em waitin’ to swing somebody at de en’ of a rope befo’ de nex new moon. Ha ! ha ! ”

“ Ye powers ! ” responded Deaderick, with a laugh, “ have they compounded for a lease of life with hell, that thus they ‘ beard the lion in his den ’ ? ” “ ‘ By the gods,’ ” he again quoted, shaking his finger at the vanishing mob, “ ‘ you shall digest the vemon of your spleen though it do split you ; for from this day forth I’ll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter, when you are waspish.’ ”

Two of the gentlemen took Jerry Hunt, who was now reviving, by the arms, and assisted him to mammy’s house, where the old woman made him quite comfortable by the use of bandages and lotions, and left him to his reflections.

An hour or two later, after Mr. Deaderick and Peter Dillard had left for the station, doubtless with a view to carrying out the former’s ‘ poetic and gorgeous idea,’ and the other visitors had departed, the two masters of “ The Oaks ” walked down to mammy’s house to have a serious talk with Jerry Hunt, and to offer for his acceptance the olive branch of peace ; but finding the door open they looked in and found that he had quietly taken his departure.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A GRAND KU-KLUX OUTRAGE.

*"All men have rights,
And power, in all its pride, is less than justice."*

—HILL'S MEROPE.

*"The prince who
Neglects or violates his trust is more
A brigand than the robber chief."*

—BYRON'S TWO FOSCARI.

WITHIN the next few days after the occurrences narrated in the last chapter, all of the party, excepting Mr. Conrad, which had been collected at "The Oaks" to plot against the power and dignity of unbridled license, had left the country to scatter in different directions and bear the glad tidings of a new hope of peace and quiet, born of secret organization, and to work its salvation through the methods of barbarism. It was plainly seen that matters were rapidly drifting to that point which would make any possible change one for the better. Even military occupation by Turchin's villainous gang of outlaws would be a relief, for they had the semblance of authority exercised over them, and did not commit crimes under the belief, taught by "Christian women" and "gospel evangelists," that they were the divinely chosen avenging angels of God and their country, and that their villainous work would entitle them to a seat on John Brown's right-hand, in the regions of glory,

next to the places reserved for William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Thaddeus Stevens.

While these secret messengers of a true benevolence were speeding on their errands of mercy and genuine patriotism, the neighborhood round about "The Oaks" was in a turmoil of excitement. Numerous delegations were sent to the Bureau agency at Barrensville, and heavy pressure was brought to bear upon Captain Swinton to induce him to send a strong armed posse "under the flag" to arrest Peter Dillard, and all of the white men seen at "The Oaks" with him, on the charge of "resisting authority," creating a riot, and shedding "LOYAL" blood.* Missionary Wheelless, unable to go in person, on account of a fractured skull, sent letters charging Deaderick with treason, in that he had invaded abandoned lands held by himself under authority of the government, and had there, in his own person, and by his own act of commission, waged flagrant war, and shed loyal blood, and charging all the party at "The Oaks" with insurrection and general lawlessness. The "Messengers of Peace," at Bethel, also exerted their influence. They wrote a characteristic letter charging, upon the authority of Jerry Hunt's visions generally, and a new and startling one in particular, and upon circumstances which they deemed corroborative of this last vision, that the party at "The Oaks" was assembled for the purpose of organizing a new rebellion, destroying the government of the United States, and enslaving all who dared oppose them; and beseeching him, by his hopes of free-

* The expressions "Loyalty" and "Loyal blood" became so fashionable among the negroes, later on, as to become vulgar; and the leaders, to separate themselves somewhat from the common herd, corrupted them slightly into "Royalty" and "Royal blood."

dom for all the human family here, and by the further hope of a crown of glory for himself hereafter, to visit the swift and sure vengeance of "the best government the world ever saw" upon these reckless, riotous and defiant violators of the laws of God and his chosen people.

There is no telling what might have been the result of these appeals if only the Harpies' allegorically-pictured prophecy had been fulfilled, and Andy Johnson's head had fallen into the waste-basket. But as it was, Captain Swinton did not enthuse. Indeed, he so far forgot "the power behind the throne," which secured his appointment, and the plain duties of his position, as set forth by that power, that he intimated, in interviews given to the various delegations, that the "truly loyal" might not always, and under all circumstances, be spotless and blameless; insulted God's own anointed by intimating that they would be expected to back their charges and assertions by *proof*; and even had the hardihood to ask, respectfully, what right Jerry Hunt had to march a force to "The Oaks" without the consent of the owners; as if Jerry Hunt were not a "free 'publican citizen of de Union League of America."

So instead of ordering squads of soldiers to bring in the alleged offenders—in case they had disregarded his written order to appear—as he had formerly done, he mounted his horse, and, accompanied by an orderly, visited all the parties concerned, including Mr. Conrad. After several hours conversation with the latter, the officer returned to Barrensville, and on the next day issued "Special Order No. 37," stating, in substance, that the colored people, "the wards of the nation," possessed no rights or privileges that were not also vouchsafed to

the white people, the former rebels; and that all were forbidden to undertake to retaliate upon persons whom they might believe to be guilty of committing lawless acts, or even to undertake to arrest such persons, except when called on by proper authority to do so. It also forbade any person to enter the premises of another in violation of the wishes or commands of the owner or proprietor, whether white or black, under pain of being rigorously dealt with; and closed with the warning that such trespass as had been committed at "The Oaks," "perhaps under the advice or instigation of unworthy representatives of the loyal North"—would be considered and dealt with as wilful riot or insurrection.

It is impossible to conceive how this mild and reasonable order could have caused the howl of anger which resounded through the land from the negroes and carpet-baggers, male and female. Wasn't this putting them, in plain words, down on a level with the rebels; and didn't it give the rebels the advantage of themselves, inasmuch as the former owned nearly all the land, and therefore could not become trespassers? Didn't it prove that Captain Swinton had been bought up by the rebels, and wasn't it necessary now that they should take matters into their own hands, more than ever, for their own good and for the confusion of the rebels? An indignation meeting was held at Bethel; fiery and incendiary speeches were made, and Captain Swinton denounced as a traitor and rebel-sympathiser. Wheelless foamed and raged with fury, and the piping voices of the lank "messengers of a matchless benevolence" were raised in devout imprecations, while a few of the more ignorant female negroes, mistaking the fury for religious zeal went off into devotional hysterics,

or, in common parlance, “shouted.”* The “Christian Martyr,” Wheelless, was appointed to open a correspondence with the “Christian Soldier and Statesman,” General Howard, and the messengers assumed the task of writing to the Rt. Rev. Gilbert Haven, and other bishops and clergy of New England, to bring the power of the Church to bear for the removal of Swinton and the appointment of the “Rev. ex-Captain (of a brigade sutlery) Charles L. Wheelless,” to the position.

New companies were formed at the meeting, in addition to the few already disturbing the country, who spent the days in marching with drum and fife from plantation to plantation, beating up recruits and foraging by night raids upon chicken-roosts and pig-pens. The few negroes still at work became sullen and discontented, and it was whispered that a regiment had been formed, with Jerry Hunt as colonel, for what special purpose no one seemed to know, and that every negro was ordered to join the Union League, under penalty of being considered a rebel-sympathizer, and dealt with accordingly. What this latter meant, if anything, no “rebel-sympathizer” could find out.

Of course, there was great apprehension felt by the white people. They knew that they were entirely at the mercy of those who directed the negroes; that they were utterly powerless to protect their wives and children should it become necessary, as then seemed certain they would have to do, sooner or later; for if only half a dozen of themselves should dare to form a line and march to the tap of a drum, they would be set upon by the available military force of the government as the would-be organizers of a new rebellion, and outlaws of the most

* This is a fact which the writer has witnessed more than once.

dangerous type. Who will ever give a correct idea of the slow torture of dread which the white people of the South suffered at that time, and from that time forward for years—a greater or less number of years according to locality—when the mind was kept in one continual strain of apprehension; when, day by day, dazed and almost demented husbands and fathers gazed into the hollow eyes of loved ones, whom they feared to leave, and hushed the thoughtless prattle of children, as if death had been in the house? Oh, miserable period! Oh, fearful anarchy! A violated constitution—inoperative laws—a perjured Congress—a prostituted press—a degraded public sentiment—a low thirst for vengeance—a prejudiced and unprincipled soldiery, composed chiefly of negroes with a few whites of the lower class, sufficient, in numbers, for spies and informers, but wholly inadequate for protection, if willing to protect; and hosts of rabid religionists and crazy fanatics from the slums of New England, like swarms of locusts from the realms of pestilence, poisoning the minds and hearts of four millions of ignorant and credulous creatures; and changing them, by the most wicked and diabolical tricks of combined falsehood and sophistry, from devoted friends to the most furious enemies. Oh, terrible nightmare of dread!*

Whatever may have been the object in the formation of a battalion, the services of non-commissioned officers, from the negro troops in the country, were procured for the

* The writer can say, with truth, that during the years 1866--7 there was hardly a day in which he did not feel that he might be forced to defend his person or family, or resent gross insult, and his apprehensions were not always disappointed. Matters were but little better up to 1869, when he left the cotton belt as a place of residence.

purpose of instruction, and it is likely, if the negroes had only been half so savage as those of the Caucasian blood who were instigating them, or had they not been restrained by an innate fear of the consequences of goading the white people to acts of desperation, the country would have been startled by some fearful act of lawlessness before the promoters of secret organization could have returned to put its machinery in motion for the benefit of their friends and families.

As it was, excepting the boisterous and insulting manner and speech which had become usual with that class of negroes, there was no visible effect of all the commotion but the burning of Peter Dillard's shop, with the tools of his trade, and the killing of his mule, which was in a lot adjoining his cabin. The killing was done by two men only, whom Dillard's wife professed to have recognized.

Mr. Stewart was the first of the absentees to return, as his trip had been only to Montgomery, the capital of the State. On the afternoon of the day of his return, he and Mr. Conrad were sitting in the shade of one of the oaks in the yard, seriously discussing the gloomy outlook for the country, when they were suddenly a little startled by the address of Peter Dillard, who had come up behind them from the direction of mammy's house. After the usual salutations, and a brief but amusing account from Peter of his trip to the great city, he said:

“I has come to see what's to be done 'bout de burnin' an' killin' an' plunderin' dat has been goin' on. Mars' Deaderick is done put a heap o' knowledge into my head, an' he sont me to prove it by you, Mars' Chyarles. He's stoppin' at my ole mistises—you know he wanted to spark my young miss befo' de war, but she was too young, an' I do believe he's stuck agin'—well, he says de reason

we didn't see de Coclutch sperrets endurin' o' de war, was 'cause dey went to de war, an' some of 'em has done got back, and dat dey ain't no sperrets no more den me and you—leastways *some* of 'em ain't—an' he wants to start 'em up agin, an' for me an' him to jine 'em an' cut up didos an' sich. I knows who done all de damage, an' ef dar is sich a thing es gittin' in wid dem Coclutches, we wants to jine 'em an' hit dem niggers wid a streak o' greased litenin'."

"Deucaleon drifted to Parnassas, did he not?" asked Mr. Stewart, with a peculiar smile, turning to Mr. Conrad.

"Yes; in a *southerly* direction," replied Mr. Conrad.

"And when the water subsided he cast stones behind him?"

"Yes; two by two."

"Exactly! But what was it, Peter?" asked Mr. Stewart, turning to the negro. "Oh! you want to join the 'Coclutches;' well, do you know where you and Dick cut that bee-tree last month?"

"Yes, sir; in de bottom here beyan' de buckeye bushes."

"Exactly. Well, it's possible that I may be able to help you, if you'll meet me at that tree to-morrow night, when the moon is one hour high."

"Yes, sir; me an' Mr. Deaderick 'll be dar ef it skeers me tell my har stands up like dem hackles Mars' Deaderick told about, in de ole country."

About a week after Mr. Stewart's return, it was ascertained, through spies, that there was to be a general meeting of organized bands at Bethel camp-ground; a night meeting, the object of which was believed to be instruction in battalion drill only. For several days before the

time appointed for the star-light exercise and amusement, Mr. Stewart and other leading “rebels,” had been actively riding over the country, getting signatures to a petition to the President to keep Captain Swinton in his present position. It was noticed, by those who were observant, that those who were engaged in this work were unusually placid and amiable, and full of joy and laughter, perhaps on account of high hopes of the success of their undertaking. They even carried this feeling to the extent of providing a novel entertainment for their colored friends, a star-light barbecue, with music and all usual accompaniments, to be presided over by Dick and his wife—*nee* Miss Jane Dillard. This barbecue was to come off on the same night appointed for the battalion drill, of which, of course, the white people—the real white people—were supposed to know nothing; and all the colored signers to the petition in favor of Captain Swinton, and all other colored friends of peace and order, were invited to come, eat, drink and be merry.

When the appointed night arrived Dick and Jane were happy, for all the young women in the country around were there, and also some thirty or more of the most respectable negro men. Large bonfires were kindled upon stands made of slabs and covered with earth, according to the usual plantation method of lighting an open-air night festival, by the light of which the votaries of the the light-footed goddess danced to the music of two banjos and a violin on a space where the earth had been scraped and beaten down, and covered with bran, so as to supply the place of a platform. This covering of “bran,” or the offal from the grist of corn, is what gave the name “bran-dance” to such festivals in the South. The Messrs. Stewart and Conrad, and several other gentlemen who ha!

assisted Dick and his aids in all preparations, saw the festivities fairly under way and took leave with the usual injunction to the men, to remember their "plantation manners," and abstain from excesses.

While these festive scenes were being enacted on "The Oaks" plantation, scenes quite different were taking place at Bethel. Large fires, like those at the barbecue, lighted the grounds for several acres around; in the house were heard the occasionally alternating voices of song and prayer, while in the lighted space in front were perhaps four hundred negroes, marching and counter-marching, forming column by companies, forming line of battle, advancing, charging, falling back and retreating; while half a dozen drums, and an asthmatic fife, kept up a continual din, interrupted occasionally by the peremptory blast of a bugle, or the angry shouts and oaths of the drill-master, who was trying to teach the mob to perform evolutions according to the proper bugle calls, and whose sense of military propriety was sorely vexed by the shouting, laughing and whooping of the frolicsome raw material, the majority of whom were evidently making a joke of the whole affair. As the night waxed late, and the fires burnt low, the spirit of hilarity and inattention to the duties of the hour seemed to increase, and to cause a corresponding increase in the wrath and profanity of the drill-master and his company officers. "Keep de line, d—n you! Hold back dar, before! Pyearten up, you hindermost fellers! Joe Roberts, hold your jaw! Sam Jones, stop dat yellin'! Who's dat mockin' a screech-owl? Ike Walton, you's nuff of a mule now, 'dout trying to bray! Who's dat flappin' an' crowin', an' tryin' to mock a game rooster!" These, and a thousand similar exclamations were mingled with the military commands of the bugle,

and the bedlam of noises from the ranks. "You'd better ax who's dat tryin' to mock a pack o' hounds cross de creek dar in de Perkins' bottom!" exclaimed a voice in response to the last exclamation. This remark called the attention of many to the fact that a large pack of hounds were in full cry, less than half a mile away, in the dense forest that extended from the "Salem Hole"—a long narrow lakelet formed by the creek, and so named by the fishermen,—to the Perkins' ford, more than a mile above.

"You 'tend to your business, Pat Collyer, an' de hounds will 'tend to dar'n. Close up dar!" shouted one of the officers, in reply to the allusion to the hounds.

"Yes," shouted Pat Collier, having first given a mimicking yell of affright, "an' dey might 'tend to yourn too, Zack Bullard, es dey did once befo' ef dey should happen to be ole Mister Cuclutches. Oh-lordy-oh-ah-ee-oo!"

This mimicking exclamation caused a roar of laughter from end to end of the line, as it called to mind Bullard's great fright, before the war, at the old Cocletz gin-house, where he had lost an eye in his flight through the underbrush, which he solemnly declared, and believed, had been destroyed by the claw of one of the spirits.

"Order in de rank!" commanded a stern voice. "Who's a' feard o' dogs or sperits, either, for dat matter! All dem things is done played out like everything else."

"But dey put lightnin' in Kurnell Jerry's heels once, an' I 'spect dey could do it agin, ef dey was to come pirootin 'round! Yah! yah!" responded the irrepressible 'rooster' mocker.

“Hold your jaw, nigger, an’ listen at de drill-master talk !”

This command, given in the voice of the one spoken to as “Kurnel Jerry,” was obeyed, for a majority of the negroes had observed that the hounds had arrived on the opposite margin of the Salem Hole, and were running up and down in full and eager cry, but in evident confusion.

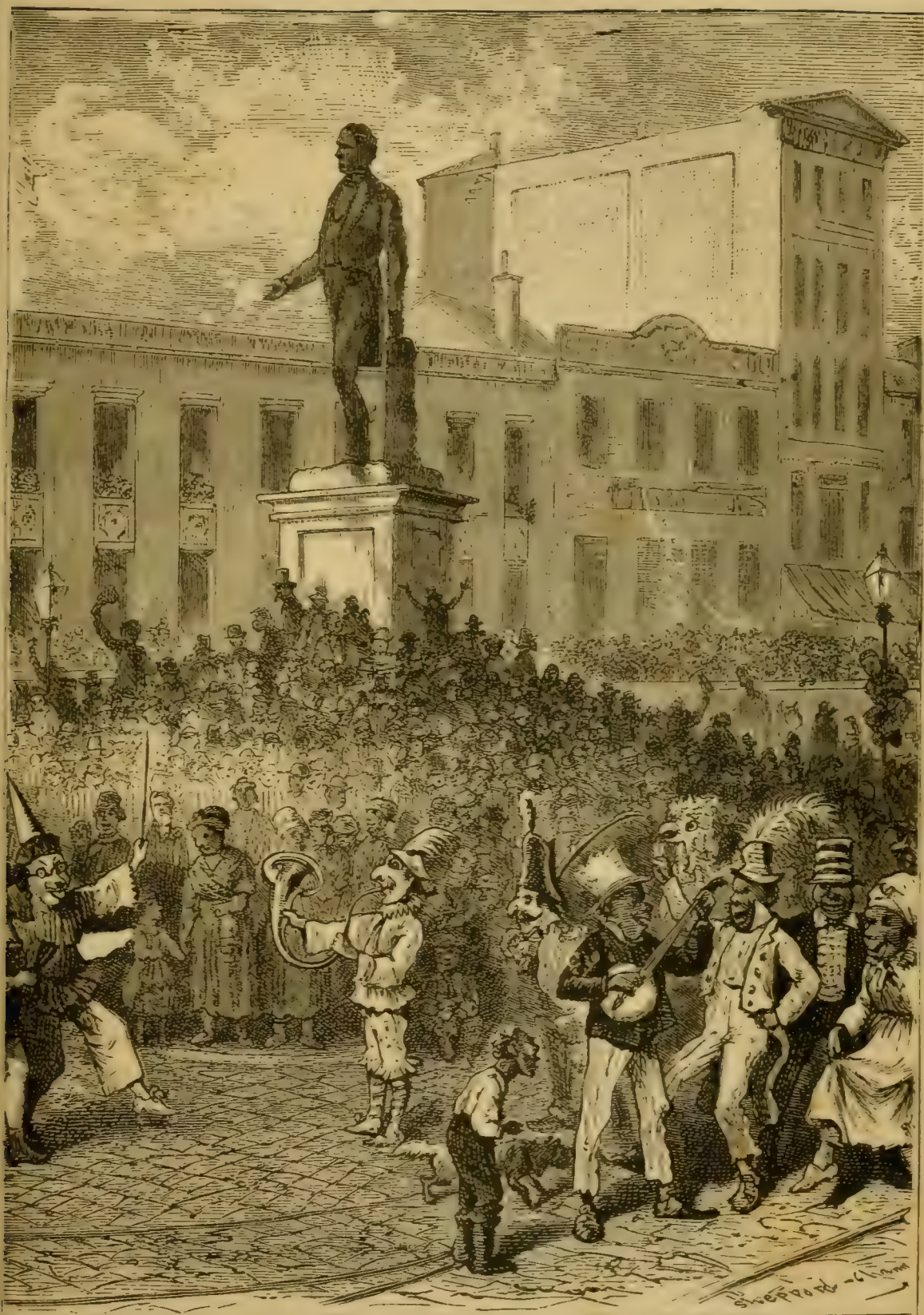
“Men,” called the drill-master, “now pay ’tention to de bugle. De fust call will be to charge, an’ de next will be to retreat. We’ll charge dem hounds, an’ I wants you to fall back in good order.”

“No ! Don’t you do it ! We can’t cross dat hole ! It’s ten foot deep ! You let dem houns ’lone if dey’ll let you ’lone ! Dey might charge too, an’ den what ?” shouted fifty voices, amid a general acclaim of dissent.

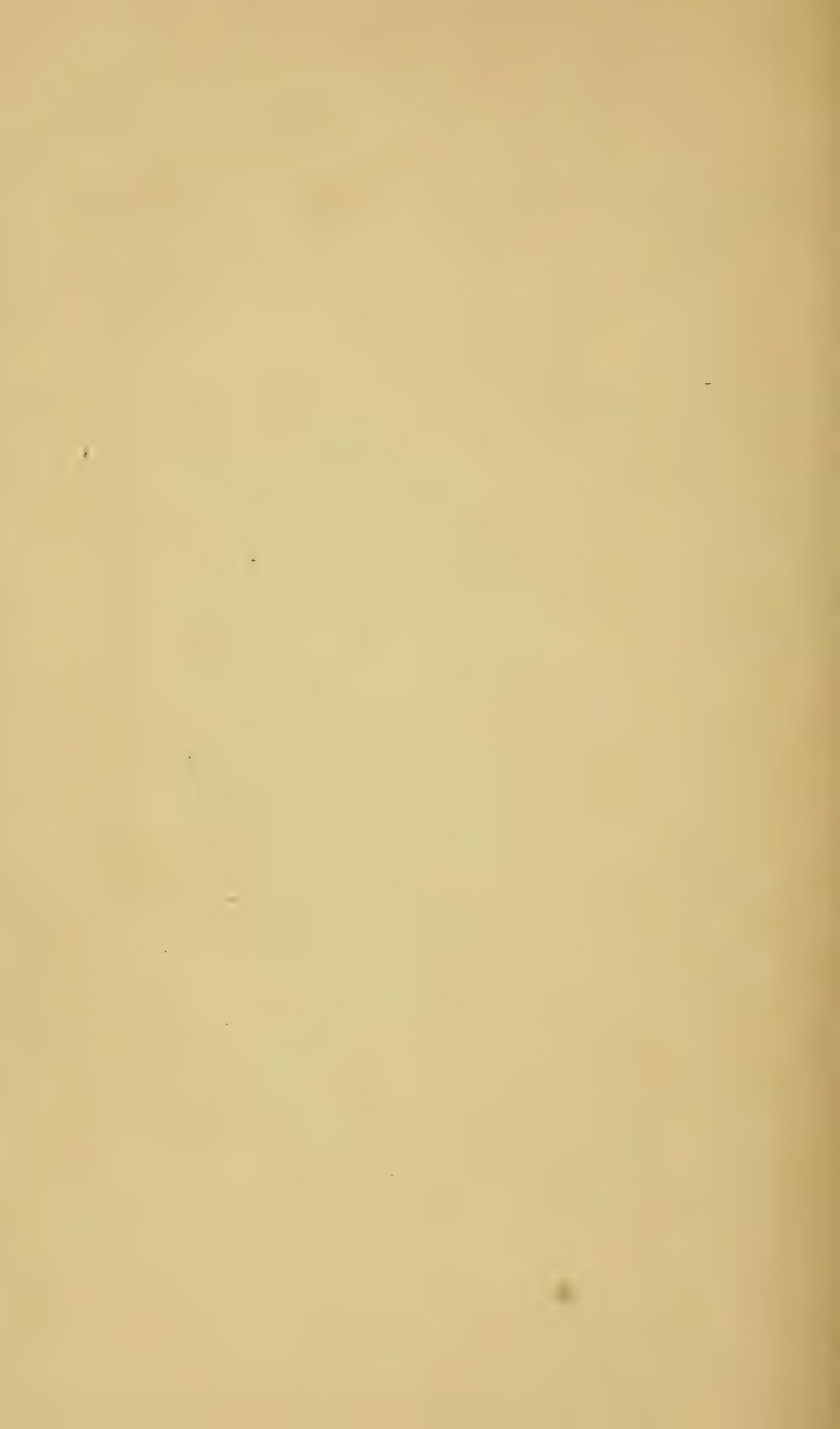
“Order, men !” commanded the drill-master. “Ef you can’t charge a pack o’ yelpin’ hounds, how does you speck to——”

The harangue was cut short by a stentorian cry from the opposite side of the creek, a cry or command, so strong and loud as to give the impression that it might have come from the lungs of a steam-boiler, and been spoken through the brazen throat of a bassoon, “ATTENTION, BATTALION !”

The sound reverberated through the woods, seeming to rustle the leaves on the trees, and to rattle the rough boards upon the meeting-house. The voice of song in the latter was instantly paralyzed, and consternation and panic seemed about to disband the battalion. As the line fell into confusion, various angry shouts of command or remonstrance were heard.



"Mardi Gras' grotesque and fearful Masquerade."



“Keep in line, men! Didn’t you never hear of a speakin’ trumpet befo’! Is you ’feard of a braying mule! Is you gwine to let some rebel fool of a fox-hunter skeer you to death!” etc., etc.

The re-forming of the line was in progress when again the strong voice came across the narrow channel:

“It is the command of the Grand Cyclops of the Lost Clan of Cocletz, that all those who have given their souls to his prince, the great Voodoo, master of the petty prince Beelzebub, do now come forward for immediate baptism!” (*See Frontispiece.*)

As the voice spoke a vast cloud of blue and luminous vapor arose out of the darkness, and intense rays of trembling blue light shot up to the tree-tops, enamelling and glittering upon leaf and bough, and revealing, in its weird brightness, the most grotesque and horrible assembly ever revealed to mortal gaze. Huge beasts, fiends and crawling things of the most eccentric and preposterous forms and proportions, with wagging tails, restless claws, and fiery eyes, lined the bank, while in the midst of all stood [a giant, with one glaring eye in the centre of his forehead, and who, as he spoke, grew rapidly taller, till he stood fifteen or more feet in height, and stretched his long neck over the black water, upon which waves of flame had begun to roll, as if in anxious expectancy of candidates for baptism in the sulphurous tide.

Panic-stricken? Language cannot express the terror that seized the hearts of the poor negroes. The occupants of the church, too, urgently spurred by fright to seek the doors, made their exits from the windows on the opposite side of the house, without regard to precedence on account of age, race, color, sex or “previous conditions of servitude,” while the battalion, in their mad haste to put additional

space between themselves and the spirits of evil, rushed over stumps, through picket-enclosed grave-lots, and out like a tidal wave upon the gradual ascent of the field beyond. If any in the flight fell to the ground, they ignored that physical and usually delaying fact, but continued to move forward rapidly, till, by the exercise of some mysteriously inspired effort of agility, they found themselves on their feet again. The bravest individual present was the drill-master, a stout, fine-looking mulatto soldier from Barrensville, in a sergeant's uniform, who, as he saw the first fleecy veil of blue mist, put the bugle to his lips and sounded the call to charge, which he continued to blow lustily till the bright light revealed the Cyclopiian giant, and he saw him spring ten feet taller at a single bound. Then the gallant call to charge ended suddenly in a sound that resembled what one might suppose would be the expiring bleat of a dying hippopotamus, and the bugler sprang off in wild pursuit of his fleeing associates, with the determination that if "the devil took the hindmost" he would not be that individual, unless his legs had forgotten their old cunning.

In the field a new terror awaited the fugitives. Scarcely had they made half the ascent of the gentle slope before a shrill bugle call was heard from the timber which skirted its top, and instantly fifty or more horsemen, all as black as the shadows from which they had emerged, dashed into the light of the waning moon, and bore down on the mob, gradually separating and forming a longer line as they approached their prey, who turned and fled in a new direction shrieking with terror. Suddenly the cry "*Kuklos!*" was heard on the left of the pursuing column, and instantly a dozen or more riders reined their horses together and dashed after an individual who seemed

to have been singled out from the others. In a few moments he was overtaken, overcome, bound and gagged, and lay panting on the ground, while his masked captors stood in profound silence around. The other horsemen dashed on, overtaking and passing many who instantly changed again the direction of their flight, until, in the distance, the cabalistic cry was again heard and soon all the other portion of the party came up, bringing another panting prisoner.

As the two men, half dead from fright, were started off in a northerly direction, one behind the other on horseback, with a guard on each side, and the balance of their black and mysterious captors riding in a profoundly silent line in the rear, one who seemed to be a leader spoke :

“Brother Night Hawk of the Right, since these, our fellow subjects of the Great Spirit of Evil, have dared to disobey the order of the Grand Cyclops, in which their associates joined, it is my order that you set free the Fire Fiend, that he may destroy their Tabernacle.”

In a moment a rushing sound was heard, and something that seemed to the blood-shotten eyes and mystery-weary brains of the negroes, like a flying serpent with the tail of a comet, mounted into the air, and ascending at an angle of forty-five degrees, bore in the direction of Bethel church. When apparently directly over the building the sound of a slight explosion was heard, and a white star commenced to descend slowly to the earth, changing in color, as it made its uncertain and apparently reluctant descent, to yellow, then green, and finally to a blood red, in which color it slowly disappeared among the trees of the grove.

As neither of the negroes had ever seen fire-works,

and of course had never dreamed of a Lost Pleiad rocket, they regarded this exhibition as showing the power of their captors over the very heavens themselves, and as they could not, on account of being gagged, "shriek out their affright," they groaned aloud in an ecstasy of terror.

Twenty minutes later, when the party halted in a thicket of timber on an eminence that commanded a view of all the surrounding country, and tied their prisoners to trees, the latter, on looking in the direction of Bethel, saw flames slowly creeping up the rough sides of the rustic building, and taking hold on the warped boards of the roof.

Having been divested of their upper clothing, the leader addressed them :

"Jerry Hunt and Zack Bullard you are vile offenders against our mutual sovereign, the Prince of Evil, in that you have wrought much mischief and plotted much more against two of his favorite subjects, Peter Dillard and Frederick Deaderick, and as this night you have refused his baptism of fire and brimstone, it is his decree that you receive the baptism of blood as a parital atonement for past offenses. Ghouls, do your duty !"

After the usual "nine and thirty" stripes had been administered, the unfortunate offenders were again addressed :

"Wayward mortals, hark ! Our sovereign King, the Prince of all that is dark and damnable, the chief ruler of all the Spirits of Evil in all the universe, will not brook to have his loyal Ghouls, the rebels, attacked or hurt in person or in property. Wheelless and the hand-maidens at Bethel have done our cause good service in the past, but they have plotted to work evil to our better servitors, the rebels, whose good work has sent many fat and oily

subjects to the thirsty fires of our kingdom, while yet the full allotment of their time was not fulfilled. You, and those who have acted with you, are but our good recruiting officers, while these, our princely rebels, discount time with royal usury, and send forward your recruits while fresh and luscious in the heyday of their crimes, and wait not for the prating priest to spoil the flavor of the offering. *Woe! WOE!! WOE!!!* to you and to Wheelless, and to any who shall dare to shed or incite to the shedding of one drop of the blood of these our royal rebels. *Remember!*”

“REMEMBER!!” repeated in unison the voices of the waiting ghouls, and from the depths of the surrounding darkness came in thunder-tones the reverberating echo “REMEMBER!!!”



In Full Retreat.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TERRIBLE MYSTERY PERVADES ALL NATURE.

*"With howls the upper air was stirred,
And groans from sunken graves were heard."*

—E. S. GREGORY'S LENORE.

*"Still as he fled his eyes were backward cast,
As if his fear still follow'd him behind."*

—SPENCER'S FAIRY QUEEN.

A VOLUME would not be sufficient to give one-half the marvelous accounts which became circulated of the affair at Bethel Church, culminating in the burning of that desecrated building. The liberal seeding of mystery brought forth more than a thousand fold. The vivid imaginations of the negroes ran riot, and yet, in relating the occurrences, it seemed to them their fancies were numb and sluggish, and wholly inadequate to the task of doing justice to the subject; but when they undertook to rise to the full height of the sublime terror, ah! then imagination, like "vaulting ambition,"

"O'er-leaped itself
And fell on t'other side."

It was asserted by many that a "shooting star" had fired the church, but Hunt and Bullard gave a peremptory quietus to that story by solemnly declaring they had seen a fiery serpent fly up to the firmament and tear out a star which it threw down upon the devoted building. The former professed to have recognized in the Grand Cyclops,

the materialized presence of the Great Spirit of Voodoo, and declared that he gloried in the stripes he had received in accordance with his orders ; for, he affirmed, they were administered with a whip of scorpions, and this was a token that they were given as a full punishment, and worked a full atonement, for all his past sins against the vengeful god of his fathers. Bullard tried to rise to the height of Jerry Hunt's enthusiasm. He expatiated on the Fiery Serpent, assented to the “whip of scorpions” theory, but failed utterly when he tried to bring himself to feel sanctimonious over the punishment, whether inflicted by Voodoo or the Devil.

As regarded the Grand Cyclops, he had shown to the horrified eyes of the negroes, a settled determination to grow to immense proportions, and their imaginations kept up the growth till his head almost reached the clouds, and he could hardly stoop low enough to hide in a forest as a man might in a field of cotton. And his terrible Court and the black hosts of Spirits ! Ah ! imagination could only lie down and kick up its heels in impotent phrenzy. The whole face of nature had undergone an entire change. The sun, moon and stars, the daylight, the darkness, the whispering breezes, the singing of birds, the lowing of cattle, the braying of mules, the cry of night-prowling beasts and birds, had all assumed to them a new and strange significance ; for what might they not be in reality, or what startling metamorphoses might they not undergo in a moment of time ? The plain evidences of their senses were no longer trustworthy, for mystery brooded over the land and all-surrounding terror seemed to fill the universe.

It was ascertained in a short time that Wheelless had lost his disciples, and the messengers' occupation was

gone. In vain did they account for all the seeming mystery of that terrible night ; in vain did they reason, argue, cajole or abuse ; the negroes had but one reply : “ We has done seed wid our eyes, an’ has done heard wid our years.” No more uncompensated labor was to be done for Wheelless, and no more ten-cent-laden darkies were to go to drink at the Pierian fount that welled up from John Brown’s peripatetic soul.

A call for a general meeting of the colored people of the country to devise ways and means to rebuild the church, resulted in the attendance of only Jerry Hunt and two others, and these refused to have anything to do with the matter, unless the new building might also be used for the performance of the ceremonies and sacrificial rites necessary to appease the vengeful spirit and allay the terrible wrath of the Great Voodoo. The messengers, having no reason to hope that their bishops or other clergy would uphold them in this novel alliance or partnership, respectfully declined it, and in a few weeks, “ folded their tents like the Arabs,” and quietly sought a more southern latitude in which, as yet, the whelming tide of barbarism had received no check.

It is useless to speak of the letters written North by Wheelless and the messengers, and of the accounts which went out in every direction of the singular affair, or to tell of the laughter and applause from one-half—presumably the “ ungodly ” half—of the Northern press, and the long fierce columns of blood and cannon balls, fire-brands and arsenic, fired from the truly sanctimonious press at the uncivilized and bloody “ Ku-Klux,” who quietly smoked his red-clay pipe and laughed with one and at the other.

Wheelless being now regarded as a recruiting officer of

the spirit of evil, and having lost, in consequence, his influence over all but the most hopelessly vicious—which class in the neighborhood embraced only Jerry Hunt and two others—and the “messengers of a matchless benevolence” being out of the way, order and civilization again assumed sway in the country, and a majority of the roving negroes settled down to such work as could be found at that late period of the season, when it was no longer possible to save the crops which their negligence had destroyed, with a more or less listless effort to provide honest livelihoods for themselves and their families. The Grand Cyclops shrank to his normal proportions, and though the blast of his horn and the cry of his hounds were often heard in the dead hours of night; and though the spirits of his clan, sometimes in black, but oftener now in habiliments of snowy whiteness, could be seen to flit across the moon-lit fields now and then, it was rarely the case, even during the yet more terrible throes of “reconstruction” and “rehabilitation”—of putting “the bottom rail on top” and endeavoring to pin it there with bayonets, or bind it there with anti-Ku-Klux laws—that there was other work to be done than the sending of a squad, or of an individual spirit, now and then, to intercept and punish—generally by a new impulse of terror only—the midnight despoiler of some white or colored neighbor’s hen-roost or pig-stye.

The church at Bethel was rebuilt in good time,—Peter and Dick having insisted on first sowing a full sack of salt over the ground,—and a devoted colored member of the Methodist Church *South*, was installed and paid by contributions from white and black alike, and again the simple, soul-saving faith of good old parson Elliot was taught. The former teachings of Religionism,

which had proved itself hardly superior to Voodooism, were covered with a veil of silent charity, and the true believers were instructed in the duties of Christian love and charity toward all mankind, and taught to look into their own hearts, instead of into those of their neighbors, for the vile sins and evil passions which are offensive to the great Ruler of the universe, and are anathematized by His holy laws.

It should not be denied that outrages, or rather, acts of violence that were not fully justified by the crimes committed, were perpetrated here and there, by mobs of persons styled "Ku-Klux Klans," acting under sudden impulses of outraged feeling; nor can it be denied by the *well informed*, that these, when they greatly exceeded the bounds of a proper punishment for the crime committed, were called to account by the "Knights of the Golden Circle," the "Knights of the White Camelia," the "Angels of Avenging Justice," the "Spirits of the Lost Clan," or the "Centaur of Caucasian Civilization." The reader can have his choice of names.* Nor can it be successfully

* The writer will mention a few cases in point, for the entire truthfulness of which he vouches: A train of ten or a dozen wagons came some thirty or forty miles into a certain little town, to barter bacon, tar and hides for dry goods. The train left the village in the early afternoon to return home, and some six or eight miles out stopped at a plantation, where there were more than one hundred and fifty negroes and no white people, to procure forage for their teams. There had been a heavy shower of rain, and while the bartering for forage was in progress a young man, who had a six-shooter, stepped out one side to see if it would fire. One chamber fired and a young mulatto girl, who happened to be passing near, was very much startled. Drawing a light shawl, which was around her shoulders, over her head, she ran screaming into an adjacent cabin with the exclamation: "Dat white man shot his gun right at my head!" A stalwart young buck, who was probably her lover, rushed out of the

denied that “The Order” did more to prevent horrible crimes and to tide the civilization of the negroes over the fearful period of anarchy referred to, than could have been done by the Freedman’s Bureau and all the troops,—or twice the number,—stationed in the South, even had all the officials been wise men and true Christians and

cabin and, despite the young man’s protestations of innocence of any design to injure or even to alarm any one, he was knocked down and cruelly beaten and kicked. This, of course, created a great commotion, and the girl who had caused it, undesignedly no doubt, finding herself suddenly a heroine, solemnly declared that the pistol was levelled at her head, and that the ball grazed her cheek. In a few moments the fury of the mob which collected reached a white heat. They bore the young man off with the avowed determination to burn him alive, and his companions, in the confusion, quickly mounted their teams and drove rapidly away. Two miles from the plantation they drove their wagons into a dense forest for concealment, and then, mounting their fleetest horses, dashed homeward to get the aid and assistance of the young man’s family, and of his and their own friends. Within a couple of hours, however, of the first occurrence, a spy,—and there were very few plantations that had not one or more of these among the negroes,—arrived at the little town, and within thirty minutes, a squad of thirty-odd men, of “The Order,” but undisguised, left for the rescue, with the understanding that the Grand Cyclops and his clan were to follow. They found the grounds lighted up as if for a festival, the young man tied to a tree and being tortured in a most barbarous fashion by the spitting of tobacco juice into his mouth and eyes, and by pinching him with hot blacksmith tongs, while many of the women, and a few of the older men were earnestly protesting against the perpetration of these barbarities. Before midnight all the offenders, who could be captured, were properly punished, and the punishers had left the plantation. But before twelve o’clock of the next day a large mob of infuriated men, friends of the outraged young man, dashed suddenly upon the plantation and commenced a general attack. The chief instigator of the outrages was mortally wounded, the girl who caused them was painfully shot in the face, and the balance, who, in the meantime, had escaped to the woods, were being hunted like wild animals, when again the “wild marauders” of law and order appeared upon the scene and brought peace to the innocent, and punishment to

patriots, which was very, very far from being the case, as all Fools who did errands have testified and can testify.

The writer has now nothing more to say concerning the so-called "Ku-Klux Klans," but he claims that the mere fact that the country,—particularly the cotton and

the guilty. The murderer was never punished, for a proper investigation into the affair would have given the military officials an opportunity to investigate the investigators.

Again, in the same section, a young negro man left his plow in the field, and went to the premises of his employer, after the latter had left the plantation, and attempted, without the exercise of any very great violence, to commit an outrage. He absconded as soon as his attempts were frustrated, but in a few days was captured by a squad of "The Order," from whom he was taken by a mob of armed and disguised men, and hanged to a tree on the road-side.

And still again, in the same section, a lady rode over to see a sick neighbor, who lived within a mile, one afternoon, leaving, on her return, a little before sunset. She failed to reach home, and days and weeks were spent in fruitless search for her, or for any trace of herself or horse. Finally, a huntsman found a skeleton, in an uninhabited barren region ten miles away from her home, which was afterward indentified as hers. The spot had evidently been a camping place, as there was a brush arbor, a cooking place, and bones of pigs as well as broken bottles scattered around; and the lady had evidently been a prisoner for her skeleton ankles were still chained together; also it was equally evident that she had been murdered, for within a few feet of her cracked skull lay a rough pine knot to which some of the hair of her head still adhered. A certain young negro man was suspected of the horrible crime, because the negroes, who had assisted in the search, affirmed that he was on the place at the time of the lady's visit, and that he left before she did, and had not been seen since. Enquiry was put on foot, but the whereabouts of the young man could not be ascertained. It was only known that he had suddenly disappeared and from the ken of his kindred and friends. Finally, however, some time after the discovery of the skeleton, he was captured by a squad of "The Order" in a neighboring state, and was returned to the scene of his supposed crimes. There were not twenty white men in all the neighborhood, but that night a mob of over one hundred infuriated men



Prosperity in the Sugar Belt.

sugar belts—from the Chesapeake to the Rio Grande, was not drenched in the blood of riots and assassinations during the period of reconstruction and rehabilitation, proves the Southern white people to be possessed of a civilization having certain qualities of excellence which, no matter what may be the brilliant destiny of the leading human races in the future, can never be surpassed while man shall continue to be frail and fallible. And he here records the prediction that the time will come when the candid and unprejudiced historian, who has thoroughly informed himself respecting the period extending from 1859 to 1884, as he glances sadly back at the wrongs and outrages of the past, while through his memory shall echo the beautiful lines addressed by one of England's great

took the poor wretch from the hands of those who held him a prisoner—and who would have investigated his plea of innocence as fairly as was possible under existing circumstances—and burnt him alive, after he had made a full confession of his guilt, in a heap of pine knots—which could be gathered in great abundance anywhere in the forests of that section—piled around a tree to which he had been chained. But they first committed barbarities upon his person too horrible to mention. It was afterward ascertained, the writer is glad to be able to add, that not one white man was concerned in the barbarous execution. The great exasperation of the negroes was attributable, beside their natural horror at such crimes, to the well-known amiability and kindness of the lady, and the popularity of her husband, who often befriended the poor of both races.

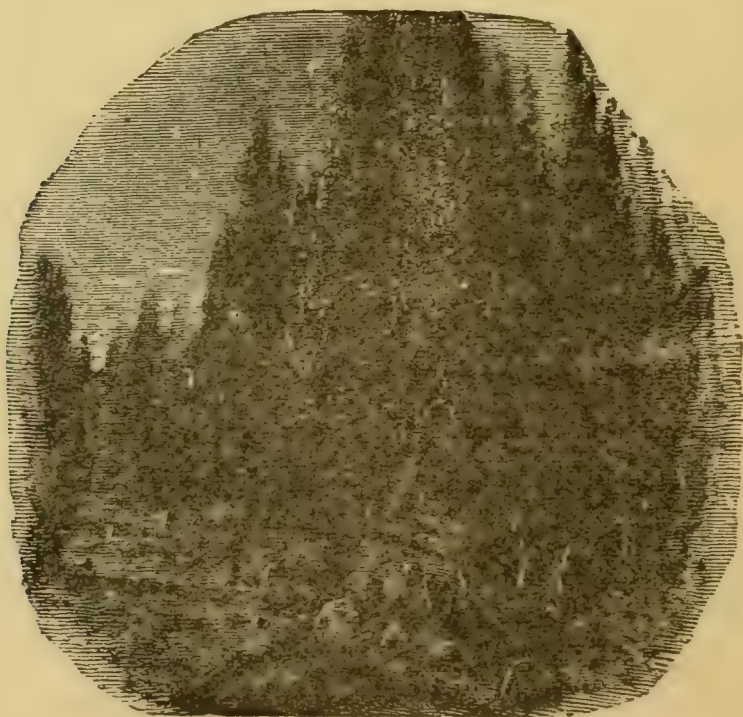
These occurrences were, in their due order, heralded North as horrible Ku-Klux outrages, and added a mite each toward the self-justification of the truly sanctimonious who had fired the Northern heart against their Southern brethren. But let it be known, to the honor of the negro race, that no such outrages were perpetrated by them until after the close of the war, and the Puritan “philanthropists” had assumed the task of attending to their moral training, and instructing them concerning their social and religious duties.

poets to the greatest and purest soldier ever produced by America—

“Thy Troy is fallen, thy dear land
Is marred beneath the spoiler’s heel.
I cannot trust my trembling hand
To write the things I feel.

Ah, realm of tombs! but let her bear
This blazon to the last of times:
No nation rose so white and fair,
Or fell so pure of crimes,—

will gently whisper to the invisible guardian spirit at his side: “Ah, noble people! As political brethren, they were generous, magnanimous and forgiving; as military foes, they were chivalrous and brilliant; but under the numberless wrongs and persecutions which succeeded their downfall they were sublime!”



Rest.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ACROSS THE WATER.

"We give all we have to buy a chain."

—CROWN'S ENGLISH FRIAR.

"In thine arms

She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,

Heav'n-born."—COWPER'S TASK.

ON the afternoon of the next day after the occurrences at Bethel, when Dick came with the mail, Mr. Stewart was delighted to find a long-looked-for letter from Marienne, but its perusal filled him with the deepest apprehension. He immediately sent a runner for Mr. Conrad, who had ridden out into the fields, and despatched Dick to seek Mr. Deaderick at the Widow Dillard's, and bring him to "The Oaks." When Mr. Conrad arrived, the two gentlemen went into the parlor, and Mr. Stewart read aloud the portion of the letter which gave him such great concern, and which ran as follows :

"I wrote you twice during Mrs. Hansel's last illness, but I now have good cause to believe that neither of those letters ever left the continent. This will be mailed by my own hands. In the first of those letters I told you of my half-sister's death, which leaves me in deep distress, and in the other I spoke of the death of a distant relative, which makes my Cousin Cesare—the gentleman whom you compelled to 'bow before a foe for the first and only time in his life,' he laughingly declares, at Williamsburg

—heir at law to a large estate, and the old family title. His absence on business connected with his inheritance gives me great concern just at this time, for I have given him, in my affections and confidence, the place formerly occupied by my poor brother, and his advice has been my sure and safe guide in all things. But my present trouble is one in which you, perhaps, are the only person who can bring sure and permanent relief. Although Mrs. Hansel has been dead less than a week, Dr. Hansel and Colonel Stoughton had arranged between themselves, and without consulting Miss Seymour, to take her to Germany to-day. I fully believe they have spent the greater part of her fortune, and have formed a plot to coerce her into a marriage with the latter before her mind fully recovers from the shock of her mother's death. Fortunately, she has been occupying a room in my apartments, at my earnest request, and I was consequently a witness of the scene when they came to require her immediate departure. The darling girl has yielded so long on her poor mother's account to every demand, excepting only the supreme one, that I had begun to doubt her ability when the final struggle should come, as I knew it would, sooner or later, after her mother's death, to speak the proper words and sentiments to these plotters against her happiness. But when they spoke of *compelling* her departure she ascended to a height of proud dignity and haughty defiance which gave me a new revelation of, and admiration for, her character. This evening my *femme de chambre* informed me that her brother, a former *valet* to Colonel Stoughton, gave her the information that Dr. Hansel has been industriously whispering, half confidentially, to his acquaintances, who are, many of them, not of the better class, that Miss Seymour has become demented in consequence of grief

for her mother's death. Can it be that this is the first step in a deep and fearful game? Alas! I do not know what authority the laws here may give this unnatural guardian over his dead wife's child; but I fear the worst, and have made a solemn vow that I shall cling to the poor friendless darling as Ruth did to Naomi, and that even the strong hand of the law shall not separate us. So you see there is a likelihood that I may be brought into serious trouble, and as there is now nothing of consequence to detain me in this giddy, delightful city; and as I still wear “the shackles,” Mr. Lincoln's Proclamation having failed, in my behalf, as signally as did your ‘Kabal Gavaelu,’ I claim the right, which, in the past, I exercised without hesitation, to call on you for aid and protection, and I ask you to come, immediately, if possible, and take me—and my friend—from the dangers which surround us and threaten dire evils.”

“Well?” inquired Mr. Conrad, as the reading ceased.

“I shall leave for New York to-night!” exclaimed Mr. Stewart, springing to his feet and pacing the floor rapidly. “Think what might happen, if the laws of that country give the old hypocrite any authority over his dead wife's child!”

“And I shall go with you!” exclaimed Mr. Conrad, taking his friend's arm and walking by his side, “But, no! I forget. It cannot be. Our funds will barely be sufficient, if sufficient, for your trip alone.”

“I have thought of that, but you must go,” replied Mr. Stewart, warmly. “I thank you for offering to do so, and I have no doubt we can make the necessary financial arrangements through our friend, Deaderick. If there should be troubles there, I should have no fear of being

unable to make a speedy end of them, if backed by your cool judgment and determined spirit."

At this moment a voice was heard from the walk near the front of the house, exclaiming :

"What ho! my Lord of Monteith! Where is your seneschal? Lower your draw-bridge, and raise your portcullis! A clansman is at your gate!"

"Deaderick, my dear fellow," exclaimed Mr. Stewart, hastening to meet his eccentric friend, "I am happy to see you, but was not expecting you for an hour."

"No, I met Dick—How are you, Conrad; give us a shake across the 'bloody chasm,' old fellow!—just beyond the gate—was coming here. But what's up? Any work on hand? Shall we have the Hosts of Darkness from the depths of flaming Phlegethon's billows, or only the gamboling Ghouls from the cheerful shores of the groaning of Cocytus? Speak, O great Minos; nor earth nor hell shall balk thy fair intent!"

"Lay aside your mummary, old fellow," laughed Mr. Stewart, slightly coloring, as he placed a chair for his friend; "I want to talk 'business' if you will excuse the expressive slang. Conrad and I want to borrow five thousand dollars for—I don't know how long—say forever—and we wish to give you a mortgage-deed to this property to secure its repayment."

"Hang your mortgage deeds on the outer wall," exclaimed the new comer, assuming a tragic attitude, "then cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war! Am I a man to lock the rascal ducats in my coffers and ask Lord Minos and the Prince for mortgage-deed? I'd rather be a toad and feed upon the vapors of a dungeon, than such a scallawag!"

"Come, Deaderick," said Mr. Stewart, with a serious

smile, “I must repeat the slang ; Conrad and I mean business. We must be off this night, if possible, for New York, to take the first steamer for Europe.”

“Ah ! you are going after Florence Seymour, and Conrad will marry Marienne D’Elfons. He has never made a fool and knave of himself as I did once at a pic-nic. Well, I give my consent. I know one who will console me, if I do not greatly err. Yes ; of course you shall have twice the sum you ask ; but mortgage deeds avant !”

“But, my friend, you ——”

“Don’t speak a word, sir, or I’ll get on my high horse again ! It happened when I was in New Orleans, that I got a check on New York for ten thousand dollars. I intended to send it on to get some trinkets, in the way of diamonds, for a certain young lady, but I can arrange differently, without the least trouble or delay, and you shall take that check. Mortgage-deeds, be hanged ! If you run away, or leave for ‘that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler’ can dodge the guards,—except John Brown’s soul,—I’ll take your plantation, reduce Dick and Uncle George, and mammy, to slavery, and live once again like a little autocrat of a small Russia.”

“Deaderick, my dear friend, I cannot consent to——” began Mr. Stewart, but was again interrupted.

“Yes, you can ! For the sake of—we know whom—you can consent, and will have to do so. My baggage is at Mrs. Dillard’s. I’ll meet you at the depot with the check, and I’ll make a memorandum of a little commission I shall get you to attend to in New York.”

Seeing that all remonstrance was useless, the two masters of “The Oaks” accepted the situation ; and, being

met by Mr. Deaderick at the depot, according to promise, they took the train for New York. On arriving in that city, they found a steamer ready to sail on the next day for Liverpool, and immediately engaged passage on her.

When Mr. Stewart took the check from the envelope in which Mr. Deaderick had handed it to him, he found the following memorandum, to which his eccentric friend had alluded, folded in it :

“ *Mem.* Go to Tiffany’s, and order a stand for a face screen, to be made 30 inches in height, of oxiodinated silver,—not of *oxydated*,—in the form of the grand cyclops, with a carbuncle garnet for the eye, and with a patent elastic back-bone, so that it may be raised or lowered at pleasure. Accoutrements and trimmings of tarnished gold ; pupil of eye, black onyx, cut into a shading of green. Best artists in N. Y. to get up designs. Cost not to be regarded, but I want my money’s worth in the work. Order it to be shipped to Miss Mary W. Dillard ; bill sent to F. Deaderick.”

The young man gave the order, as desired, at the time that he exchanged the check for bills on a Liverpool house ; and, before the hour of going aboard on the next afternoon had arrived, he had received a dozen or more designs for the farcical (or, should we say, allegorical ?) work, one of which he selected on account of the classic attitude, and the ludicrous blending of mirth and villainy in the expression of the countenance. Having arrived in Paris, the two gentlemen sought the nearest fashionable house of public entertainment, where Mr. Stewart left his friend, and repaired alone to the Hotel L’Esperance, the place of Marienne’s residence. Marienne had received from him, on the eve of his departure from New York, a cablegram, giving the day and hour of his

probable arrival in Paris, and as he was more than a day overdue, in consequence of heavy head-winds and storms throughout the passage by sea, he found her suffering much anxiety on his account. After mutually warm and hearty greetings, and a few hasty inquiries, Marienne said, pointing to a pair of wide sliding doors which stood partly ajar at the further end of the room :

“Monsieur, Florence is in the back-parlor. The poor child’s nerves have been terribly tried within the past few days—we were compelled to appeal to the American minister for protection—and I must ask you to make your meeting as little exciting to her as possible. I shall go to look after my feathered pets now,” she added, playfully tapping him on the shoulder with her fan, “but shall be back in ten minutes, which you may occupy in renewing your acquaintanceship with my patient.”

As Marienne left the room, the young man passed through the opening between the doors which separated the two rooms. In the darkness, at the further end of the back parlor, where heavy silken curtains excluded all light save what entered from the adjoining room which he had just left, sat Miss Seymour, with her hands covering her face, while inaudible sobs of deep emotion convulsed her slender form. Advancing beyond the centre of the room, and being only able, in consequence of his sudden transition from light to comparative darkness, to distinguish the outlines of the form before him, he paused, and inquired, in a half-reproachful tone of voice :

“Florence—Miss Seymour—will you not welcome me?”

Then an audible sob reached his ears, and he saw the silhouette figure make an ineffectual effort to arise, and then fall back upon the seat, with hands extended, as if in

helpless and supplicating greeting. The next instant he knelt by the side of the sobbing maiden, and, clasping her trembling form in his arms, he whispered, passionately :

“ Florence, darling ; precious idol of my soul, forgive me,—*forgive me !* At last, after all these weary, miserable years, you are mine,—*mine !* Heaven has given you to me, and, with Heaven’s sanction, I swear that you shall never be taken from me again ! Dear love, will you not repeat, with your own sweet lips, the precious assurance that you are my own, now and forever ? ”

“ Yes ; I am your own,—my poor, broken heart has found its rest at last,—your own, now and forever ! ” murmured the young lady, as she gave a timid kiss in response to the passionate caresses which were being pressed, with devouring eagerness, upon her passive lips.

Twenty minutes later, as Marienne returned, she was met at the door by the young man, who, taking both of her hands in his, exclaimed :

“ You will find I have not excited your patient, and that she is quiet and happy. She has told me what a dear, devoted sister you have been to her, and I have a right to add the deep gratitude of my heart to hers. I go now to bring my friend, and Florence’s cousin, Frank Conrad, to greet her, and make your acquaintance. He has as noble a soul as even yours, Marienne, and you will find him in every way worthy of your deepest and purest friendship. We shall be here within an hour, and shall invite ourselves to dine with you, unless you deem it more prudent to give Florence quiet and rest. ”

“ Oh, no ; come, by all means, before six o’clock, our dinner hour, ” said Marienne, returning the warm pressure

of her friend's hands. “I fancy there is no quiet and rest so soothing and invigorating as the presence which banishes all fears and doubts from the mind, and fills the heart with a sense of the realization of all the bright aspirations of a life-time.”

The two invited guests appeared in good time at the Hotel L'Esperance ; and, after spending one of the most delightful evenings ever known in the experience of either, as they wended their way homeward, a short time after the midnight hour, Mr. Conrad exclaimed :

“Stewart, old fellow, I want to whisper a secret into the safe-keeping of a brother's confidence. You learnt from Florence's pleasant raillery this evening that in the callow days of my youth I was very susceptible ; but I have never loved really, and if I ever shall love—‘if,’ do I say, as though I have not long hoped to meet my destiny, and as though prescient instinct has not already pointed her out !—the queen and only sovereign of my heart shall be Florence's gentle friend, the lovely Marianne D'Elfons.”

The return passage across the ocean during the hazy, dreamy days, and the full-moon-lighted nights of September was all that the four happy travelers could desire. Mr. Stewart's and his lady-love's indulgence in that “egotism of two,” which love has been aptly described as being, left the two companions of their voyage almost entirely dependent upon their own resources for enjoyment ; and it was soon observed, by wakeful passengers who restlessly promenaded the deck until the midnight hour, that the other couple were fast becoming dual egotists also.

“Florence, sweet love,” said Mr. Stewart on one of the last evenings of the voyage, “on my trip over, when fearful forebodings caused my impatient soul to fret at

every delaying circumstance, we were beset by head-winds and opposing storms, which drove us from our course and gave us great delay. But now, that I have you by my side, that my heart is at ease, and that I know the worst fate which can possibly befall us will be to sleep sweetly in each other's arms beneath the billows which are bearing us so rapidly homeward, every circumstance of the voyage is propitious. Calm seas and favoring breezes speed us on our way, while beautiful nature, above and around, smiles brightly and benignly upon us. May it not be, my darling, that the hushed sounds which come up to us from the distant realms of the sea, 'like the rustling of the wings of Silence,' is the whispering voice of the oracle of our destiny telling me to behold the contrast between the voyage with you and the one without you, and bidding us accept the present as a harbinger of our future voyage of life?"

"Ah! let us not indulge in prescious musings!" replied the young lady, nestling closer to her lover's bosom. "Remember how sweetly the stars shone upon us on that one happy night at 'The Oaks,' and how soon the black clouds of despair overshadowed our horizon, and the cruel hand of fate wrapped its shroud around us, and tore you away from my clinging heart, leaving my poor widowed soul to weep such bitter, bitter tears. No, let us not forecast the future lest we tempt Providence. Our Father knoweth what is good for us. We will live only in the present. In each present moment we will so fulfill every duty of love and trust, toward Him and toward each other, as to insure the ushering in of another happy moment, in which again, to fulfill our duties of love and trust; and so on, from moment to moment, till the years shall pass and bring us to the haven of perfect joy,

side by side, and hand in hand, before the Eternal Throne.”

“Darling,” said the young man, musingly, while something like a mist glittered upon his eye-lashes, “I know that you loved me,—I may say I have never doubted it,—but tell me how, loving as you did, so earnestly, so devotedly, you could have sent me that cruel note on the occasion of my last visit to the Atheneum.”

“Cruel !” exclaimed the young lady, sitting erect and turning on the slatted bench occupied by each, so as to face her lover, “Ah ! it was you who were cruel ! But I forgave you and chided my heart then, as I do now, for the accusation ; for I knew then, despite all the tangle of fact and plausible falsehood, that you loved and trusted me—even as I know now that you do. But that is a painful subject ; we will speak of it no more.”

“Stay, darling ! do not say so. Let us speak of it at least till I may see through the mystery which your words only make deeper. How could you deem me cruel when I merely asked to know your pleasure with reference to my visits ?”

“I do not understand you !” exclaimed the young lady, gazing, with a startled expression, into her lover’s eyes.

“I had been told that you desired to see me no more, and in my note I only asked that you put those cruel words into writing, that I might wear them upon my heart in the fore-front of battle.”

“Heavenly Father !” exclaimed the young lady, rising suddenly to her feet, “I got no note ! He told me that you—Ah ! merciful God, forgive him !” she again exclaimed, interrupting herself and covering her face with her hands as she smothered a convulsive sob.

The young man arose and stood by her side, but not knowing what to say, he remained silent, and only placed his hands upon her head, as if in caressing benediction, and made a motion to press it to his bosom.

“No!” exclaimed the young lady, drawing back as she dropped her hands from her face and looked steadily into her lover’s eyes: “Will you remain passive a moment!” Then, approaching him and laying her hands upon the lapels of his coat, she looked up into his eyes again and said: “Darling, I feel constrained to usurp your prerogative, and make this unmaidenly advance as a proper and just piacular sacrifice for the wrong I have done you in the past. I have always believed you one of the noblest and most generous of men, and I was hardly conscious that the false position which you occupied in my thoughts made you less than a perfect character, until now that I know the position to be false,—in respect to what I speak of,—and I have additional proof of the nobleness of your nature. And now will you please stoop that I may kiss your forehead?”

The young man laughingly bowed his head to receive the pure caress, and the young lady added:

“The past is dead; let it bury itself. Let us promise that we will never refer to this matter again, for it can be productive of pain only to both of us.”

“You forget, sweet one,” rejoined the young man, “that I am still in mystery, except that I now know, what I half-suspected before, that some deception was practiced; and while you do homage to what you suppose to be virtues in me, you propose to bar the door against the acquisition, on my part, of any knowledge of a real nobleness and generosity which would cause me to bow down and worship you. Well; be it so! Perhaps

I had better not prove you to be so perfect an angel that I shall feel unworthy to stoop and kiss the hem of your garment. That is almost my feeling at this moment, and I readily assent to your proposition. The subject shall be sealed to our lips forever! But tell me, while we are speaking of old matters, why it was that you never answered even one of Conrad's letters after Gettysburg, and never so much as sent me a token of your existence and remembrance while I was in prison?”

“That is a branch of the forbidden subject,” said the young lady, with emotion. “We must agree to ‘let the dead past bury its dead.’ But this much I must say,—duty, both to you and myself, demands it. I did not know that you had been in prison till informed of the fact by Dick, your former coachman, when he came to see me in New York. We will include this branch of the subject under our seal of silence; and now, as a token that you assent to this, and that all your fine speech of this moment was not *meant* for flattery, which, in reality, it was, of course, I offer my forehead for a pure, Platonic kiss,—a Stygian affirmation, as it were, by the god Apollo,—and also a good-night benison, for I see that Marienne has left the deck.”

The pure-kiss was given, but the young man could not resist the temptation to demonstrate the fact, in his usual vigorous manner, that Plato did not occupy the highest niche in the gallery of his sentiments, while he held the palpitating and half-resisting form of his beloved in his arms.

Within a month after the foregoing moonlight conversation, the *Barrensville Herald* copied the following paragraph from a New York letter to a New Orleans paper :

“There was an extremely *recherche* affair last evening at No. —, Fifth Avenue, the elegant residence of the Hon. — — Seymour. The occasion was the marriage of a lady relative of the honorable gentleman—Miss Florence Seymour, for some years past a resident of Paris,—and Mr. C. A. Stewart, of Alabama, a typical Southern gentleman, well known in many parts of the South. The groom was attended by Brig.-Gen. Francis M. Conrad, a gallant Union soldier during the war; and the first bridesmaid was Mademoiselle Marienne D’Elfons, a native, I learn, of New Orleans, and one of the largest real estate owners in that city. She is a cousin to Count Cesare D’Elfons, of France, in which country she has resided to the present time since the taking of the Crescent City and its occupancy by Federal troops. Among the distinguished guests present on the occasion were the Hon. Horace Greely, a connection of the bride, and Alabama’s millionaire, Colonel Frederick W. Deaderick, well known in your city as ‘the Reformed Puritan.’ The presents are said to have been exceptionally elegant, that of Col. Deaderick being declared by connoisseurs to be the most unique and original in design, as well as one of the most chaste and beautiful, ever exhibited upon such an occasion.”

CHAPTER XXXVI.

INTER SPEM ET METUM !

*“ Philosophy and Reason ! Oh how vain
Their lessons to the feelings.”*

—MISS ELIZABETH BOGART.

*“ Your gentleness shall force
More than your force move us to gentleness.”*

—SHAKESPERE. “AS YOU LIKE IT.”

SOME years have passed since the *Barrensville Herald* noticed the marriage referred to in the last chapter ; and in the mean time it has published accounts of two other brilliant marriages in which it is hoped the reader feels an interest : Mademoiselle D’Elfons, with Brigadier-General Conrad at the old D’Elfons mansion, in New Orleans, and Miss Mary Dillard with Colonel Deaderick, at the residence of the bride’s mother. To-day, being Ash Wednesday, yesterday, of course, was Pancake day, Shrove Tuesday or Mardi Gras, according to the country in which it may be named ; and supposing the reader to have attended the gorgeous and unique celebration which that day has received from time immemorial in New Orleans, we take his arm and ask him to accompany us on a visit to our old friends, who are assembled, as has become an established custom with them at this season, at the old D’Elfons mansion, where Madam Marienne Conrad, now Countess D’Elfons, by right of inheritance, her cousin having died in France suddenly and unexpectedly, dispenses elegant hospitality.

We pass from the turbid and boiling flood of the great "Father of Waters," up an unusually broad and elegant street, or rather avenue of double streets with lawns of good size, covered with velvety turf and ornamented with statues and shrubbery, dividing the two, and giving 'magnificent distance' to the view from pavement to pavement across them. This we recognize as Canal street, the beautiful Boulevard of the Crescent City. Turning to the left, up St. Charles Street, we pass the hotel of that name, which makes a grand display of architectural beauty under the imperfect light of numerous gas jets, and the pale glimmer from the silver-bow of the new moon, pass long avenues of gas lights which open to the right and left, displaying for a moment their throngs of bustling pedestrians and hurrying vehicles, pass stately mansions standing boldly out in their pride of beauty, and lovely cottages modestly veiling themselves behind bowers of magnolias and roses, and on till we pause before a grand, old-fashioned building, occupying a full square, and standing in haughty reserve back from the plebeian thoroughfare. Its three-storied portico, supported by massive fluted columns, with elaborately-carved Corinthian capitals, and flanked by oriel windows, looms up like a white spectre-giant, amid the dark foliage of slender hollies, and of spreading live-oaks from whose far-reaching branches delicate festoons and slender pennons of long gray moss wave gracefully in the evening breeze. Lights are glancing through the half-closed lattices of many windows, as we approach and enter the wide hall, with its carved wainscoating, and turn into a large room, with tall mirrors reaching from the soft Persian carpet to the curiously-molded cornice.

Sitting in front of two windows which extend from the

floor, and whose rose-colored damask hangings are drawn back to admit the fresh breeze through the embroidered lace curtains, drawn down to modify its coolness, are two groups engaged in pleasant conversation ; one of gentlemen only, and the other of ladies. The gentlemen are speaking of political matters, hence the segregation of the gentle sex. We recognize Messrs. Stewart, Conrad and Deaderick, who are listening, with marked interest, to the words of a gray-haired old gentleman whose rather unhandsome features are almost beautiful, as a whole, in their expression of candid simplicity and all-pervading benevolence. In the other group we recognize Mrs. Stewart, Mrs. Conrad, and we know the beautiful brunette to be Mrs. Deaderick. We also recognize Jane, who at the moment enters, bearing a baby wrapped in fleecy laces, in her arms, with the remark to Mrs. Stewart :

“Miss Florence, little Conrad has been ’sleep for ever so long, but dis blessed baby keeps on laffin’ an’ crowin’ ; an’ I ’speck he wants to help entertain de company ; bless his little mouf.”

“Well, bring him here, Jane,” said the lady, going to the masculine group, and addressing the old gentleman :

“Cousin Horace, you shall not quarrel with my husband. The right to express his opinions is the only prerogative of a freeman which he can now exercise, and if its free and untrammelled indulgence shall bring on clan conflict between Cavalier and Puritan, *I, sir ;*” she said, playfully shaking her small fist under the old gentleman’s nose, “shall fight his battles with all the *old* gentlemen such as *you*. Oh, you may smile at the fist, sir ; but you don’t know what the finger nails might be able to do in a righteous cause. But I am going to require you to kiss

the cheek of your little namesake as your sign-labial to a political truce for the balance of the week."

"Very well," laughed the old gentleman, taking the bright-eyed Seymour-Stewart into his arms and bestowing sundry awkward dandlings and caresses, which the little one received with demonstrations of joyous hilarity. "I shall kiss the little fire-eater, and, perhaps, the caress and the name may exert a benign influence, which will cool the Southern ardor of his blood, and enable him, when he grows up, to sink sectional devotion in the grander feeling of a boundless national patriotism."

"Do not hope it, sir," replied the lady, as she received the little one into her own arms. "Patriotism, like charity, should begin at home; and the past history of our country proves that our grandest national patriots were men who gave their first and deepest devotion to their own section and people. Is it not natural that a child should love its own mother more than his collateral relatives, or the collective family; and if a son could prove recreant to the love and duty due his mother, could or should he be trusted as a champion of the family?"

"Ha! ha!" laughed the old gentleman, taking hold of the lady's skirt to detain her, as she turned to leave him; "you are very apt and practical in your illustration, and I'll be bound you'll so rear that little rebel that, should the necessity arise, he'll fight for his mother, whether natural or political, even against the saints of the earth should they assail. But you are a bad truce-maker, for you break yours in the act of making it, and I therefore feel justified in holding it in abeyance, till I finish the remarks cut short by your threatening demonstrations."

"Very well, sir;" replied the lady, taking one of the baby's arms and shaking the chubby fist at the old gentle-

man, “but recollect, this right arm will not suffer you, nor any, nor all of the saints of the earth, to be ‘sassy’ to papa any sooner than to mamma.”

“Stewart,” exclaimed the old gentleman, laughing heartily, “I hope Florence may not develop a bad case of the prevailing politico-phobia. As it seems to be contagious down here, perhaps I’d better get Conrad to send me off. But as I was saying: ‘One great cause of trouble is, that your people look upon the enfranchisement of the negro as a gratuitous insult—a causeless infamy. You believe that it was intended to humiliate without even the mean motive of advantage to be derived. You do not believe that the negro was enfranchised for his own sake, or because the Republican party believed him to be entitled to self-government, or fit for self-government, but simply and solely because it was hoped thereby to degrade, overawe, and render powerless the white element of the Southern populations. You regard it as a fraud in itself, by which the party pretended to give back to the South her place in the nation, but gives her instead, only a debased and degraded co-ordination with an inferior and soon to be made hostile race. In a word, you deem that you were entitled to a fish and have been given a serpent. I have often been amused at the white-lipped rage which some Southern men display after expressing these sentiments, to have the Northern auditor smile in his face and ask, ‘Well, what of it?’ The anger of your people seems to the Northern mind useless, absurd and ridiculous. It appears as groundless and almost as laughable as the frantic and impotent rage of the Chinaman, who has lost his sacred queue by the hand of the Christian spoiler.” *

“Yes,” replied the young man, while a flush burnt

* This speech is adapted from “Bricks without Straw,” page 355.

upon his cheeks, "any rage, even that of a Chinaman, in order to be laughable, must first be impotent. The poor Chinaman considers it a great indignity to have his queue cut off, and all human creatures, no matter how low in the scale of humanity, feel some resentment at an indignity. I have known a Plymouth Rock Puritan to become mildly indignant at having his nose pulled, or at having a little harmless saliva blown into his face. Such ebullitions are the natural outcroppings of a common instinct or failing of humanity. They are nature's advertisements that tell where one may find the spirit of a man residing, or only a human tenement 'to let.' As to the causes which induced the Republican party to enfranchise the negro, you have stated them very concisely ; and were you inclined to be disingenuous, which I know to be not the case, the ravings of the Thad. Stevens' class of politicians and of the Congress generally—to say nothing of the party pulpit and press—would put it out of your power to make other answer to those charges than the quoted question, 'Well, what of it?' But that sneering and contemptuous question so flippantly asked by the present, must have a solemn answer from the future, perhaps from the very next generation, for great is the power of political demagoguery, and race prejudice is a most fearful weapon for it to wield. God grant that the answer, whenever it shall come, may not be written in blood by the hand of anarchy. In this connection I will dissent from one little point in your statement of the case. We do *not* believe the intent to humble was 'without the mean motive of advantage to be derived.' To one living in the country, who has facilities for learning what is going on in secret as well as in public, it is painfully evident that the Republican party expect to derive the greatest

possible advantage from enfranchising the blacks and disfranchising all they can of the whites. They believe political and religious emissaries in the Freedman's Bureau, Union League and Mission Schools can and will so prejudice the negroes against the whites, as to make political affiliation between the two races impossible for all time to come; and the mastery of the South being secured to the negro, they secure to themselves *a perpetual lease of power in the General Government.*"

"Ha! There is a show of plausibility about that," said the old gentleman, looking steadily at his companion, "and this belief, perhaps, enables the persons who form the Ku-Klux conspiracy to justify the acts of that organization in intimidating negro voters?"

"No, sir! I think the so-called Ku-Klux take but little account of such physically inoffensive things as negroes' votes. They care but little who may be President or members of Congress, so long as they know they have only themselves to depend on to meet the present emergency, and to keep under control the tide of anarchy and barbarism, which threatens to overwhelm us, before the negro shall be permitted to indicate in what direction his natural instinct will lead him. In order to ensure the mastery for the Republican party over the negro, it is necessary to fire his heart against the Southern white people. This being done, he is not satisfied with political vengeance,—to his mind, a milk-sop sentiment,—but yearns to taste of vengeance in its full flavor, and through the medium of his physical senses. His teachings having thus inspired him with a desire to injure, deface, destroy, or appropriate our property, and to commit lawless acts against our persons, and crimes against the peace of society, nature's first law demands that some power shall step for-

ward and check his mad career. I think the acts of the so-called Ku-Klux are designed only to punish overt acts of villainy, and to intimidate the vicious. If their grotesque performances, in some instances, inspire the negro with such ludicrous fear of the supernatural as to make him afraid to leave his cabin at night in order to attend the League musters, or the Voodoo-like, so-called, prayer-meetings, that works no detriment to him, to say the very least, and is a point gained in the interest of peace and good order."

"Was the burning of a Christian church, and the flogging of devout worshippers, one of the innocent grotesque performances that was calculated to work such great good in the interest of peace and good order? I allude to the Bethel church outrage, which, by the by, occurred in your state."

"Yes, sir; it was. Since the war, it has been several times necessary, for the peace and well-being of the negroes themselves, to break up assemblages of Voodoos; and if for the peace and well-being of the whites it becomes necessary to break up similar assemblages of persons calling themselves Christians, I consider the acts equally laudable."

"Then you mean it to be understood, as I understand you, that your people will not submit to the teaching of even a *Christian* doctrine that may be calculated to disturb the peace and well-being of the white people?"

"Ah, Mr. Greely," laughed the young man, "I see you are indulging in what, I have been told, is a pet amusement with you! You are having an intellectual or argumentative practical joke at my expense! You being one of the first moral philosophers of this continent, I need not reply, that the teaching of any *Christian* doctrine

must necessarily redound to the peace and well-being of all classes of a community. It is the doctrine of ‘cannon-balls, fire-brands, and arsenic;’ the doctrine of the Massachusetts bishop, his compeers and minions, that our civilization commands to meet with ungloved hands and nerves of steel. The building destroyed was dedicated by our people to the Holy God, but was used by those people to advance the interests of the ‘bad angel;’ and the men flogged were poor dupes, whose acts carried the lessons given them into practical operation. There may be no law to prevent the preaching of murder, rape and arson, but those who perpetrate the crimes will always be punished in the South, even if law-abiding citizens have to assume the role of outlaws in order to inflict the punishment. There is a great difference between our Christianity and this Plymouth Rock religionism. Ours would teach the ‘Christian spoiler’ to abstain from wantonly insulting the poor Chinaman by cutting off his queue; theirs would teach him to cut off the Chinaman’s queue, head and all, unless the poor heathen quickly learnt to sing their psalms with a nasal twang and a sanctimonious leer.”

“Ha, ha, ha !” laughed the old gentleman, with real amusement, and, turning to the ladies, he exclaimed :

“Florence, come here to this husband of yours, and make him sign the truce before he kills me with politics and religion ! By the by, where is the other savage,—the redoubtable one you and Conrad promised to show me, who so longed, during the war, to get an abolitionist’s scalp, but could never even strike the trail of one ?”

“I will send him in, Mr. Greely,” said Mrs. Conrad, taking Mrs. Deaderick’s hand, and leaving the room, with a nod to Mr. Deaderick to follow.

Mr. Stewart laughingly gave his 'sign-labial' to the truce, and the party were comparing notes of adventure during the magnificent pageant of yesterday's Mardi Gras, when the door giving entrance from a side piazza opened softly, and our old friend, Dick, entered, looking a little dazed, but submitting resignedly to the escort of Mr. Deaderick's arm.

"Mr. Greely," said the gentleman, approaching the group, "I have the honor to introduce to you my old friend, Dick Anderson Stewart. Dick, as we familiarly call him, had, in the past, but one besetting sin, and that was a yearning to ornament his belt with the scalp of an original abolitionist. He went to the war with this object in view, and though, for years, his buckskin jacket flitted wherever the carnival of death held its wildest revelry, his desire to meet such an individual, face to face, has never been gratified till this moment. He has now become a 'reformed rebel,' else in turning you over to him, I should add the usual supplication for mercy upon your soul."

"Mr. Dick Anderson Stewart," said the old gentleman, coming out from the group, and shaking Dick warmly by the hand, "I am happy to know you. I *am* an original abolitionist—have even been called the father of abolitionism,—but, as you see, my scalp-lock has the frosts of many winters upon it. I have grown gray in serving the cause, of what I believed to be, human rights and your wrongs, and I hope there would be no poetic justice in my scalp being taken by you."

"Oh, no, Mars' Greely; not by no means!" protested Dick, turning a shade blacker in compliment to nature's effort to get up a blush. "You's a gent'man, sir, an' not like de abolitioners I was arter. Dey was mean white fokes dat tole lies on our white fokes, sir!"

"And how do you know that I did not tell lies, too?"

"Oh, I kin tell a gent'man, sir, by lookin' at him, no matter whether he's dressed up or not! You 'minds me a little of my ole marster in Ferginny, sir."

"I shall take that as a compliment. Eh?"

"Well, sir, dar wasn't many han'somer gent'men, an' es for *better*, dar wasn't none. I don't b'lieve dar was in de whole worl'—not even in ole Ferginny itself—another gent'man es ignunt es my ole marster was. Even Mars' Chyarles don't come up to him in dat."

"Why," exclaimed the old gentleman, in surprise, "Mr. Stewart is an educated gentleman!"

"Yes, sir; but he ain't no more educateder dan his pa was!"

"Well, what shall I understand you to mean by their being ignorant?"

"Oh, I don't mean de common, every day sort o' ignunce, sir! I means dat he was a gent'man dat never done no harm, an' never even *knowed* no harm.* You 'pears like dat sort o' gent'man yourself, sir."

"Do I, do I, indeed! Ah, if I had all the knowledge and wisdom of the world I would gladly give it in exchange for that kind of ignorance, could it be retroactive and undo the harm which my blind zeal in the interest of philanthropy has done. But is not the old master of whom you speak still living?"

"No, sir; de abolitioners—or dar frens, I 'speck it was—dey kilt him endurin' o' de war!—kilt him in his own house," added the negro, while his voice faltered

* These exact words were used by a colored man, an aristocrat among his people, in Lynchburg, Va., in speaking of the father of a literary gentleman, whose poems have been put under contribution by the admiring author of this volume.

slightly, and a suspicion of moisture gathered in his eyes, "right by de side o' my ole mistis; an' she didn't live but two days arter dat."

"Ah! that was sad—sad indeed!" said the old gentleman, sympathizingly, laying his hand upon Dick's shoulder. "You are an honest fellow, and I honor you for your fidelity to those who won your love and friendship. I shall bid you good-night now, but I must have a good long talk with you to-morrow. I do not resemble your idea of the typical abolitionist, and yet I did more than any—than all others perhaps—to bring on the state of affairs that made the wreck and ruin of this land possible. Ah! Dick; a sentimental boy may set a prairie on fire, but his efforts cannot arrest the flames, nor can his tears atone for the ruin that may result!*" No doubt the midnight cry of the Ku-Klux strikes terror to the hearts of the malefactors of this unhappy land; but often the gentle moan of the zephyrs wrings my heart as theirs can never be wrung; for fancy tells me that I hear in it the reproachful sigh of a million souls that have been swept to untimely graves by the results of my teachings. But my error was not of the heart. It has been the aim of my life to live and act under the inspiration of that commendable ignorance of which you spoke, but I have learnt, too late, alas! that, in the great affairs of human life, one cannot be as harmless as the dove, unless he shall possess and exercise the wisdom of the serpent. I fondly believed my compeers and compatriots to be only a little below the angels, and have found many of them—alas, so many!—to be only a little above the spirits of evil. It has been prophesied by a self-styled astrologian, who doubtless

* Mr. Greeley is said to have used the exact words of this sentence when in the South.

“Ah, Dick! a sentimental boy may set a prairie on fire,” etc.



drew his inspiration from the political and not from the zodiacal horoscope, that I shall die of a broken heart. I devoutly pray that this may not be verified; but I would gladly give my scalp, with the gray hairs which I feel the future must honor—if only on account of the honesty and integrity of my motives—if, even at this late day, I could call off the pack which I hounded on, and which would now rend even myself should I stand in the way; and could have the power to still the angry passions of fanaticism which only became excited to phrenzy by the circumstances that should have stilled them forever!”



Stilled.



Hope for the Future.

EPILOGUE.

A VISION OF VINDICATION:

BY

EDWARD S. GREGORY.



The Dream of Peace.

EPILOGUE.

A VISION OF VINDICATION.

*“ Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceedingly small ;
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all.”*

—FREDERICK VON LOGAU.

A MOVEMENT hidden, yet slow at first and uncertain, agitated the gray mist which clung to the side of the rocks where I stood. As the cloud broke away, still hanging on some spots of the declivity below, to projecting points of the giant granite, I could see that I occupied the height of some sombre mountain, and that both before and behind lay wide and dim reaches of distant vision.

Where the sun stood, or what was the hour of the twenty-four, I could not discern from any sure sign of nature. It seemed to my dazed senses as if nature for the occasion had lost her usual lines of time, and that the light which now spread, soft and brilliant, on the retreating mist, belonged to the air itself, and shone from no star or sun. Not that the sky seemed to be overcast, or that the day had any weird malison of eclipse upon it ; but the morn and the murk were yet so mingled together that the source of the illumination did not yet appear. The narrow footing which I had kept and which now showed itself to be the comb of a mountain, commanded the vistas of valleys, whose lines were lost in far horizons ; and along these the fringe of clouds still kept a Parthian per-

sistence of slow and sullen flight. Many times the routed shadows made their rallying returns ; and sometimes the flanks of the mountain where almost wholly concealed again. On such occasions, a new element of mystery imparted itself to the solitude. The strange silence, which had been heretofore broken by no word or wing or wind, gave way to yet stranger sounds which appeared at once to be near at hand and yet muffled and smothered by distance. Yet another magic the advance and retreat of the shadows appeared to work in the scene. As the gray curtain closed and broke, the view itself strangely changed ; and the rear of the retreating eclipse left a deep and mysterious transformation. So swiftly the changes succeeded each other, and so wonderful were the new combinations and fresh creations and revivals which their stay afforded, that I may not be expected to describe in accurate detail nor with adequate effect, the order and the figures of the shifting pictures, but there were some forms and some features that buried themselves deep into memory ; and voices that echo from the heart of the vision yet ; as if some trumpet still spoke across wide reaches of tossing seas.

* * * * *

If the mist had still lain on that black side of the mountain that fell behind me, I could not have seen so clearly the desolation that made it seem the home of a curse. But though there draped over it no cloud, the darkness was yet more dismal, and the shadows rose ghastly from below. Sad, indeed, to my sense was the scene on which the eye rested, in the murk that seemed to interpret the evil destiny of the gloomy ground. Here opened a desert through the frame of the shade, which man—not God—had made. The mountain was

none too abrupt, the valley none too wild, for the happiest cultivation; and indeed there yet remained to the wrecked and wasted soil the widowed relics of that bounty and beauty which bless the marriage of fertility and toil. Trees were torn from the wooded space they had adorned, fields were scarred with all the harsh wounds of war; gardens gave only the squalid harvest of thorns and weeds; where homes had opened the door of a hospitable welcome, above which circled the smoke of focal altars, now ruins only lay huddled and buried; and here were scattered ashes not fallen from genial fire-sides, but from the fell flames of destruction, sown like salt, which witnessed the vanity of hope, and threatened the sacrilege of restoration.

Black birds of beating wings and the sharp beaks of ravin, in sudden and shadowing flocks, swept over this strange area of anathema. At times a deeper darkness sprang out of the mystic valleys, and gave itself out in ragged, irregular outlines, that deployed and hugged close to the crest of the blasted pines. At such times, when this weird veil hid the sloping hill-sides, there seemed to peer through it the rude and heavy sculpture of earthen fortifications; a smell as of sulphur rose faint but sick on the laden air; and, dim and dead, came thin reverberations, as of rifles and cannon and clashing sabres; there came, too, words of command and the order of battle, all mellowed and rhythmic through the aisles of distance; and threads of fire, that shone like the rose-flame of summer lightning, swift and brilliant, across the shroud of the shadow, and through the heart of the hills.

* * * * *

While yet I wondered within me what this might mean, and only appeared to myself in the vision, to have heard such voices and seen such dramas of real action in

some lost life, I felt that a Presence stood suddenly beside me, like that of Virgil in Dante's dream, whose eyes rested also on the shifting scene :

"Spirit !" I called, in my first surprise ; but I felt no fear of the stately and gracious presence ; "where is it we are standing, and what are these sounds that so faintly reach us, and these scenes of battle and ruin that lie locked beneath us, within the Western mists?"

What made me say Western, I cannot now tell, unless it were that the desolation that spread that way, suggested the day-death, and the miracle and mystery of night.

"We stand," answered the august presence, "on the Mount of Vision. The cloud has come back to obscure the landscape of battle. Look East, where the light is now widening, from the top of yon mountain, through all the hills and dales."

I looked as the spirit bade, and saw, with ever-increasing wonder, which still carried with it no trace of fear, that the scenes before us were the same, in nature, as those which were hidden in the mist behind ; the same bowered bosoms rose robust from the valleys of verdure ; and the chain that gleamed bright between them was the richness of warbling streams ; the trees that were blasted in the pristine picture now lifted bright crests, in which birds sang valentines to each other among the blossoms ; the agriculture, elsewhere dead, here wakened the rustic music of jingling teams ; and the furrow laid open by the sturdy plough, gave back the gratitude of Nature's own healthful breath. Axes which rang through the forest seemed to rouse no echoes of lamentation ; for as fast as the trees dipped their lofty pompons, they rose in the new guise of vine-clad homes, or marts of commerce, or temples of worship, or trains of travel, or buzzing schools, or in

some other form that witnessed the reign of peace, and the wide-spread benison of prosperity, industry and social weal.

All through this confusion of minor sounds, there climbed the strong pulse of a music which seemed to come from a mill-wheel in lively motion ; and all through the width of mingled shapes and hues, one blaze made a special commanding beacon, and this, I thought, seemed to flash as a molten ray from the open eye of some forge or furnace. There were other mysterious likenesses between the two views that lay before and behind us, but the *white* that was sprinkled between the mount and the sunshine, was certainly *not* ashes, nor any sown salt of a curse. It seemed to be rather the fleece of some flower, as of COTTON growing, and we could even see, or seem to see, live human forms that moved through the midst of it, and plucked, amid singing, the snowy blossoms. And the balsam that came, in occasional puffs, *that* was not sulphur nor saltpetre ; but it seemed the breath of TOBACCO blown across the space from some pipe of peace, that lay hid in the lowlands in tall log-cabins, in fields of the graceful deciduous leafage.

Was there nothing real and nothing lasting in the panoramas of this wonder-land ? Swift as the coquetry of the weaver's shuttle, a curtain fell over this vision of Arcady the Blest ; and there came into view afresh, the dreary, heart-harrowing pictures of the Western vale, on which the cloud first closed.

"The view of the battle is nearer and clearer," was all that the spirit said to me ; but I looked for myself, and saw this spectacle unfold :

The leaves on the trees hung heartless beneath the furnace of a July sun. Great armies of weaponed and ban-

nered men were gathered along the bonnet of a rugged hill, and on the more gentle declivity which reared itself slightly across an intervening vale. "Multitudes, multitudes, in the Valley of Decision;" and this was one fulfillment of the prophet's dream. On the hill crest, among the ivy and laurel, and beyond a rough but accurate service of earth-works, glanced the marble shafts and crosses which marked the *Campo Santo* of the dead. Here swarmed and swept a wide defence of heroes who wore blue uniforms, and who carried above them the meteor ensign of the stars and stripes. Beyond, through the gloaming of reluctant dawn, an army no less of heroes and patriots clustered faithful about their battle-consecrated guns. It was an army of tattered uniforms and bright muskets, and they wore the gray; and the banner above them was rent and spent in the stormy and starry experience of mighty and bloody battles. Many a monogram of victory was traced on the rags which these gray heroes bore over their own rags—both illuminated and immortal; and there rode behind them a gray old man, who had little to say, but the eloquence of whose very presence waked the line into lyric cheers as he passed along, as if some wind out of Paradise had sent its pulse through the pines.

"Look!" called the angel, "and see the scene on the height."

It was hard to distinguish any sight through the canopy that now sprang sudden through the *feu d'enfer* of shell-loaded cannon. It was hard to hear any word that was spoken through the deep diapason of death and the cries of pain or of pride that were flung from each mighty and defiant host. Yet I could see one picture of vivid hues and magnificent proportions, that wrote itself clear

and strong against the sulphurous background of the balanced battle.

An officer of majestic presence, of noble and unruffled countenance, of clear and cloudless blue eyes, and wearing the eagles of a general of division, suddenly showed himself, mounted on a powerful white horse, at the eastern end of the blue line of battle. Two hundred guns, on the line of the gray, hurled all their torrent and torment of iron—of shell and of shot—at the crest of the Cemetery Hill, as this officer rose to horseback. He calmly lifted his tasseled hat to salute, as a gentleman only could do, the polite attention of his chivalrous enemies. This was all the sign that he gave of knowing that any enemy or any artillery was in his neighborhood. Unattended, unmoved, serene, deliberate, through all the thunder that burst in blood about him; past all the rifts in the ranks, where the lightning of battle-death struck the men down fast beside him; past all the tragedy of manifold mutilation, and the swift shrieks which pierced even the burden of the cannon-chorus;—slowly, smiling, superb, sublime, rode the major-general on his proud white horse, till near the close of the grand rounds made by him, which left in every man's breast the strength and inspiration of a new-born devotion,—a shell struck him also to the ground, and unhorsed the bright belted knight. Abrupt as the bolt itself, followed the mystic shadow of the vision; and the hero and the field were hidden at once from view.

As the arches of vision opened anew to the east, there appeared even more halcyon signs, and more hopeful presages of the wealth of the land, that came forth, fast and fresh, from the long-hidden purses of nature. Industry, scientific and systematic, had coaxed from earth the secret

places of her treasure. It seemed as if Aladdin was the presiding genius of the transformation ; for there were now new closures and clearings ; the woods showed new vistas, in the midst of which roads and roofs gave the sure tokens of civilization ; the beard of the corn rose ranker and wider ; the carpet of earth smiled everywhere more gayly green ; and the cadence of mill-wheels and furnace and factory bells had risen from the monotonous solo which once warbled their utterance to the dignity of a chorus, which musically mixed with the *angelus* and the chimes from church spires of worship. Here and there, far and wide, moved divisions of a numerous army, that might have been lent from Lilliput, so small were most of its soldiers. There were boys and girls in the glad and active ranks, and their only weapons were satchels, with books and slates. The forts they held [flew peaceful banners above their open portals, and the inscriptions they bore was writ in golden characters, so lofty that I could read from the mountain the sacred pledge of a free education to every child of the people.

But there were other throngs and other voices than those of work and workmen. There came a great and happy, yet confused and multitudinous murmur, as of some crowd of undaunted, victorious crusaders, who saw above their shields, and almost within range of their arrows, the object of their consecration, and the term of their toil.

It was a vast, vague army that swung itself forward toward the far figure of a majestic man, whom I could know, for all the distance and dimness, to be the hero who rode through the fire of hell. As yet, I could not distinguish where he stood, but noted that close around him were circled graybeards of wisdom and experience,

and the brows and eyes of grave public counsel. Nor could I yet interpret the mission of the multitude, from every section, that pressed upon him, except that each man bore a paper slip in his hand, and that each voice shouted the name of the peaceful and patriot hero. "Whence comes this great host of friends?" he asked, with a gratified smile.

"FROM THE RIGHT BANK OF THE POTOMAC, GENERAL," from one great body of the host, came back the answer, thin but plain, through the distance.

It was not Morgan who respoke the memorable words. There was no buff and blue of the Continentals in all the transformations of the scene; unless, perchance, I sometimes seemed to imagine it around the quiet gray hero in the cannon scene. Was it the royal old age of Early that spoke the words; or Fitz Lee, gallant and gay, or Gordon, or Ransom, or Hampton? Once it would seem to be one, and then another of these; and yet again, all; and still again, all the voices of the uncounted army of peace and union that swept, unweaponed, to the presence of the patriot hero. Was it all prophecy or rhapsody or the mere mirage of imagination? I would have asked the angel; but whenever he looked at the Cavalier of Honor, his lips seemed to quiver and his eyes to swim. Only once I heard—or seemed to hear—through the lattice of broken accents the words: "That is the noble knight banneret HANCOCK, the Bayard without fear and without reproach, the nation's heart and the nation's trust." And again the quick shade descended; and the host and the hero were rapt from my observation.

"Spirit," I said, to the silent but friendly presence; "what have meant these past visions?—for now, both from East and West, the rays that lightened from some

unseen sun are hidden again, and as if forever, beyond the rim of the hills."

"The scarred and seamed fields which thou sawest," the angel answered, "are those of thy Sunny South, where the 'track of grim desolation and unutterable ruin marked where the avenging cannon-wheels had passed.'* Thou sawest, too, in the *camera obscura*, some passing glimpses of those historic and immortal actions, in which the best and bravest of North and South gave their breasts to the hurricane of iron and leaden death for the sake of the cause which each believed to be bulwarked in law and justice, and blessed of God. Thou hast seen the worst and utmost that brethren could wreak on each other in wounds and waste; in destruction, ravage and carnage, that the course of destiny, if not the verdict of Truth, might be left to the last logic of kings and peoples—in the court of cannons. And thou hast been privileged to witness in the mirage of memory that act of personal intrepidity which gave to the long battle its final decision for the cause of the Union—the fearless and peerless ride which fired into devotion the blue line of legions, on Cemetery Ridge, against which afterward, the headlong chivalry of Pickett and Pettigrew flung its power and spent its blood in vain. Thou sawest men and deeds which cast over war's worst cruelties of carnage an illumination that shall quicken true hearts to unselfish courage, while the sun still shines."

"There are clefts among the roots of the mountains," I said, "from which the shadow has never yet wholly ascended. Yet there come out of it strange noises as of shame, and uncouth forms drift through the penumbra, as

* Draper.

if on missions of robbery, wrong and insult. Other forms, yet more spectral and menacing, seem to go on missions of redress, and carry the guises of lawless justice.

“Let the shadow rest deeper henceforth and forever,” said the presence, “on these evil eras of wrong that was weaponed by law, and of right that was self-armed against legal wrong. Let the grave of the past, beneath the black pall of a merciful oblivion, shroud these wild deeds and their doers, both the just and unjust; and so wait till the archives are unfolded, at the last Assizes.”

“This, then,” I said, as the view toward the sunburst grew even more brilliant and clustered with fresh forms of plenty and beauty; “this,” I said, “is the new South-land, as the future will weave her fortune.”

The genius of prophecy appeared to dilate in the rising and roseate dawn, and tongue and eye alike were touched by the altar-coal. This green and gold before thee,” he answered, “is but the first measure of fulfillment and compensation; the earnest of glories that are yet to be. The herald that stands tiptoe on some loftier crest of dreams, shall forerun the knowledge of slowly succeeding years; and to his eyes shall unroll a broad tide of wonders which would move thee, even as thou standest on this mountain of vision, to want of faith in the prophetic promise. These teeming fields, these buxom harvests, these trailing plumes of the steam-ships, and the long land caravans of trade; these white-winged sea-birds that fly in the jesses of commerce; these flaming forges and whirling wheels of the factory and shop; these broad marts of exchange and temples of gold; these mines that sparkle with stones of fire; these home-nests of culture and comfort; yea, these schools, in which the weeds and seeds of ignorance are painfully taken from the minds of

those who are to be the parents of generations yet unborn; the very sanctuaries in which incense swells from the altars of prayer and song; are but the outward and visible tokens of the new baptism of favor, of power, and of influence, at home and abroad, that shall crown a rescued and vindicated land.

“All the hard and long way through a painful trust, divinely committed and faithfully and patiently endured; the task of educating into civilization and religion the rude children of the dark continent across far seas; all the way of bloody and disastrous battle; through want and sorrow, and the loss of the dearest and bravest, all the length of the *Via Dolorosa*, past the ashes of homes and the wreck of families, the waste of treasure, the servility of public counsel, the insults of cowards, the persecutions of prejudice, the confusions of intermeddling ignorance; past all the long ordeal of dislocated industry and endangered society, and the peril of a subverted civilization, and the volcano of passions which throbbed and thrilled under the sinister and secret fingers of vindictive malice; through distraction, poverty, bankruptcy and tribulations untold; through want of heart and want of hope, and the very enmity of nature and the curse of a barren and blasted soil, the South has come up to the true measure of freedom, manhood and moral courage, and woven in sunlight a destiny which shall be more regal than her children's and her champions' most lifted dreams!”

As the genius ceased to speak, his figure grew more and more indistinct in the scaling sunshine, and now nothing remained of its grandeur but an added aura on the mountain crown. And lo! as I looked down the auroral vista, there hung across the burning mountains, distinct in the glancing gold, TWO FLAGS,

which seemed by some mystic law of effulgence, to borrow fresh lustre from each other's honor. One of them was the battle flag of the Confederate States of America—the symbol of the independent South, in its trial of blood; and the other was the meteor standard of the Stars and Stripes; the symbol of a Union defended by the common heroism of North and South and enshrined in the hearts of a happy and grateful re-united people. Under the crossed draperies of these blood baptized banners, stood two figures, vaguely surrounded by a ghostly host; and the twain, I thought, seemed the stately spectres of Jeb Stuart and Phil Kearney the “white lily of Chantilly,” and the *beau sabreur* of Dixie. And beyond where these stood, smiling and clasping hands, a white shaft like the marble that rises over the mingled ashes and married honors of Wolfe and Montcalm in the castle of St. Louis, shone, fringed with the gilt of morning; and on the broad pedestal I could read this inscription through the wind-touched tassels of blossoms that wreathed its base:

MORTEM VIRTUS,
COMMUNEM FAMAM HISTORIA;
MONUMENTUM POSTERITAS
DEDIT.

“Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment-day;
Under the roses the blue,
Under the lilies the gray!”

THE END.

7103 lay

602 Ovens



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